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THE FIRST GEORGE

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**THE LIFE OF WILLIAM MAKEPEACE
THACKERAY**

THE THACKERAY COUNTRY

VICTORIAN NOVELISTS

"FARMER GEORGE"

"THE FIRST GENTLEMAN OF EUROPE"

BATH UNDER BEAU NASH

THE *BEAUX* OF THE REGENCY

ETC., ETC.

THE
FIRST GEORGE
IN HANOVER AND ENGLAND

BY LEWIS MELVILLE, pseud. L.S.
Author of "Farmer George" &c. *George Melville*

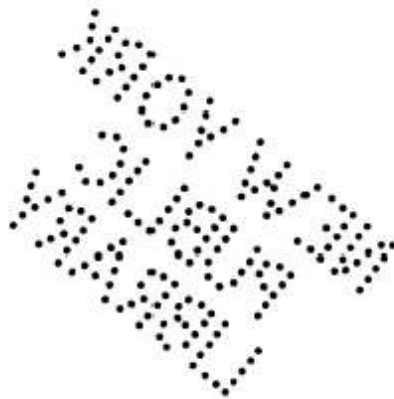
WITH EIGHTEEN PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I

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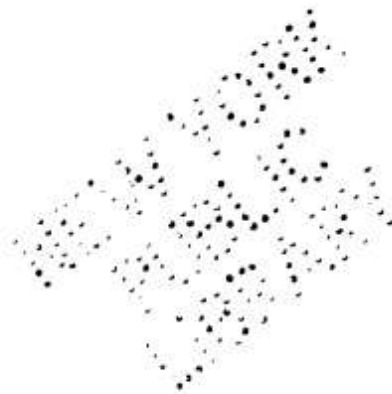
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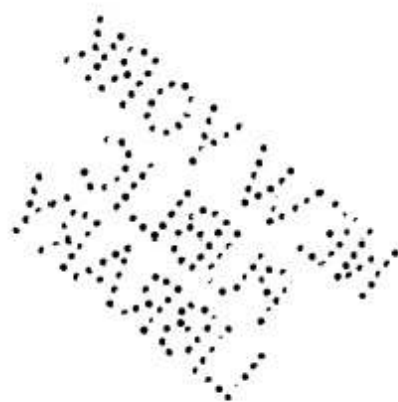
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To
JEAN AND JESS





PREFACE

It is with George Lewis the man rather than George I the King that this work is mainly concerned, and a great part of it is devoted to a detailed account of those fifty-four years of his life that were spent at Hanover—a subject not before treated at length by any English writer. Though politics are, so far as possible, eschewed, it has, however, been considered advisable to discuss the negotiations for the succession to the English throne, and these are presented, not as they appeared to English statesmen, but from the Hanoverian point of view.

In the opinion of the present writer neither the character nor the conduct of George I has received justice at the hands of English historians, and in this work an attempt is made to remove the several misunderstandings generally accepted without question in this country. It is suggested that he was far more intelligent than is usually admitted; that, indeed, his abilities, without being remarkable, were by no means so contemptible as they have been represented by most writers; and that he, who was an excellent Elector of Hanover, did not suddenly lose his gift of Kingcraft on coming to England. It is urged that he was not the cold, selfish libertine portrayed by

his biographers ; that his conduct as a husband, though not above suspicion, was, bearing in mind the age in which he lived, far removed from being scandalous ; that his alleged desertion of his wife for the lady afterwards created Duchess of Kendal is entirely unsupported by satisfactory evidence, and that such evidence as has been adduced, arising out of errors in dates, instead of supporting this theory, actually goes to show that his intimacy with the Duchess did not begin until after he had divorced Sophia Dorothea. It is shown that he was not grossly immoral, that he did not, as was currently reported and has been repeated ever since, bring to England a band of mistresses, and that of his two "favourites," as they were called, who accompanied him to this country, one may have been his morganatic wife, while the other beyond all question was his half-sister.

It may be mentioned here that the spelling of the French and German passages quoted in the following pages has not been modernised, and that the translation of these and of other passages of which the original is not given, unless otherwise stated, has been made by the author. For the sake of simplicity the Christian names of foreign folk have been Anglicised, thus "Georg Wilhelm" is here written "George William," "Ernst August" as "Ernest Augustus," etc. ;

and to prevent confusion the surnames, often spelt differently in different books, follow the spelling in the index of Erich Count Kielmansegg's scholarly edition of the letters of Duke Ernest Augustus.¹ The Electress, or the Electress Sophia, betokens the mother of George I (who, after 1698, strictly speaking, was Electress Dowager), and not his wife, who was divorced before her husband inherited the Electorate of Hanover, and so never had any claim to the electoral dignity; while in the earlier chapters George I is here spoken of as George Lewis, the form by which he was known in his Continental dominions, and which serves to distinguish him from his uncle George William and his son George Augustus: only after he ascended the English throne was he called George, *tout court*. Those readers who are unfamiliar with the genealogy of the House of Brunswick-Celle may find useful (i) the table showing the descendants of Ernest the Confessor appended to Chapter I, and (ii) the more elaborate genealogical tree of the reigning Powers of the House of Guelph. The latter has been translated by the author from the compilation by Dr. H. Böttger, and it is inserted by permission of Herr Pokrantz, of Hanover.

¹ *Briefe des Herzogs Ernst August zu Braunschweig-Lüneburg an Johann Franz Diedrich von Wendt aus dem Jahren 1703 bis 1726. Herausgegeben von Erich Graf Kielmansegg.* Hanover, 1902.

The author has consulted many French and German works that, with rare exceptions, have not been translated into English, and among these may be mentioned the correspondence of the Count de Broglie, the Electress Sophia, Ernest Augustus (brother of George I and afterwards Duke of York and Albany), Leibnitz, and Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans ; the memoirs of the Electress Sophia, and Nöldeke's biography of her ; the lives of Sophia Dorothea by Count Schulenburg-Klosterröde and Schaumann ; the memoirs of Baron von Pöllnitz ; and the historical works of Onno Klopp (*Der Fall des Hauses Stuart und die Succession des Hauses Hannover in Gross-Britannien und Irland*), Malortie (*Der Hannoversche Hof unter dem Kurfürsten Ernst August und der Kurfürstin Sophie*, and *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*), Vehse (*Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig in Deutschland und England*), Schaumann (*Geschichte der Erwerbung der Krone Gross-Britanniens*), Havemann (*Geschichte der Länder Braunschweig und Lüneburg*), and Heinemann (*Geschichte von Braunschweig und Hannover*). Coming to works by English writers, the present writer desires to pay tribute to the labours in this field of history of the late Mr. W. H. Wilkins, as evinced in *The Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, and he is eager to do so, since in the chapter on the marriage of George and Sophia Dorothea he

has on some matters found himself at variance with this authority; he has found Toland's contemporary *Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover* of great value; and he wishes especially to acknowledge his indebtedness to the works of Dr. A. W. Ward,¹ who almost alone among modern English historians has thrown light upon the dark passages of the House of Hanover at home in its relations with this country. A complete list of authorities is printed in the Appendix, where will be found reprinted for the first time since its appearance in 1705 Toland's narrative, and other contemporary documents.

The author gladly takes this opportunity to express his thanks to Mr. Charles Cornwallis Stevenson, British Vice-Consul at Hanover, who devoted much time and took much trouble to assist him in his researches at Hanover; to Dr. A. W. Ward, Dr. Perlbach, of the Royal Library, Berlin, and the Rev. Henry William Clark, who have kindly answered questions bearing on the subject of this book; and to Messrs. Longmans, Green, & Co., who have permitted him to insert in this work three letters from Mr. W. H. Wilkins's *Love of an Uncrowned Queen*; while once again it is his duty, as it is his pleasure,

¹ George I (*Dictionary of National Biography*); *Great Britain and Hanover: Aspects of the Personal Union*, 1899; *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*, 1903; etc.

to make mention of his gratitude to Mr. Thomas Seccombe, and to acknowledge his indebtedness to that historian for many valuable suggestions and much information.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale, K.G., has courteously permitted the reproduction of several portraits and sketches, preserved in the Fürstenhaus and the Familien-Museum at Herrenhausen ; and Count Alexander von Kielmansegg has most generously presented the author with photographs of portraits in his possession of Lady Darlington and George I, the latter by Kneller, an heirloom from Lady Darlington, which will also be found inserted in this work. The portraits of the Electress Sophia, the Countess von Platen, Lady Darlington, and the Duchess of Kendal (this last from the picture in the possession of Count Werner Schulenburg) are reproduced in England and America for the first time.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

SALCOMBE,
HARPENDEN,
HERTS,
June 30, 1908.

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THE FIRST GEORGE

VOL. I

CHAPTER I

THE HOUSES OF BRUNSWICK-LÜNEBURG AND HANOVER

WHEN George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, ascended the throne of Great Britain and Ireland in 1714, a loyal poet, carried away by enthusiasm, gave rein to his imagination, and hailed the new sovereign as a direct descendant of Woden. It is not proposed in these pages to investigate this statement, nor is it intended to trace George's descent from the union of the Suabian and Italian branches of the House of Guelph in the person of Guelph VI, Duke of Bavaria, from 1070, nor even from the grandson of that Prince, Henry the Lion, who died in 1195. It is also deemed unnecessary to follow the divisions of the Brunswick-Lüneburg territories after the death in 1252 of Otto I (called "The Child"), or to give any account of the innumerable minor transfers of properties, that arose out of marriages, exchanges, purchases, and other transactions, which, sometimes simple, were often exceedingly complicated.

Indeed, it suffices, for the purposes of this work,

to begin with a passing mention of the youngest son of Duke Ernest of Celle, William of Lüneburg, better known as William the Pious, who in his later years lost his sight and his reason, even as, some two centuries later, did his descendant, George III of England.

Of the fifteen children of Duke William, seven were boys, and each bore the title of Duke, and, after their father's death, had his own territory. Like all the German princes of that day, they had been taught that their first duty was to further the interests of the House, and so thoroughly had they learnt this lesson that, when they came into their inheritance, they met in solemn conclave to discuss what was the best course to pursue. It was clear that if each married, and, after making provision for his daughters, divided his remaining possessions among his male children, the erstwhile considerable estate of Brunswick-Lüneburg would in the next generations be merely a number of properties, each only a little larger than the park of a wealthy English nobleman. This disintegration, they decided, must at any cost be avoided, and the only possible alternative appeared to be an arrangement that only one of their number should marry, and that all the rest should leave their dominions to him and his heirs, so that eventually all the territories would again be united

under one sceptre. The brothers then drew lots, and the privilege of matrimony was secured by George, the sixth son of Duke William.

George, after making the grand tour of Europe, and afterwards spending some years in military service, settled at Celle in 1617, bringing with him his bride, Anne Eleanor, daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse. Of this marriage there was issue, three daughters, two of whom died in childhood, and the third, Sophia Amelia, married in 1643 Frederick III of Denmark; and four sons, Christian Lewis, George William, John Frederick, and Ernest Augustus.

In the meantime at Lüneburg reigned in succession the four eldest sons of William the Pious : Ernest on the death of his father, in 1611 Christian, in 1633 Augustus, and three years later Frederick; each of whom had observed the family compact to remain single, and so had no legitimate heirs. The fifth brother was dead, and so the next heir was George, and, after his death, in 1641, his eldest son, Christian Lewis, who had succeeded to his father's dukedom of Calenberg (Hanover-Göttingen). In 1648 Duke Frederick died, when Christian Lewis, according to the terms of his father's will, had within fourteen days to choose between retaining the Duchy of Hanover or taking that of Celle in its place : that which he rejected

was to be the portion of the next son, George William. Christian Lewis preferred Celle, and Hanover - Göttingen therefore passed to his brother.

Christian Lewis married Dorothea of Holstein-Glücksburg,¹ but, as she bore him no children, pressure was brought to bear by the ducal family on the heir-presumptive to marry, so that there might be successors in the direct line. George William was a man of pleasure and infinitely preferred the pleasures of bachelorhood to the distasteful task of making a marriage of convenience. However, it was pointed out to him it was his duty to marry, and he began leisurely to look round the German courts for a wife.

When other and more inviting matrimonial projects had fallen through, Elizabeth, daughter of James I of England, espoused in 1613 the Elector Palatine, Frederick V, some time King of Bohemia ; and it was upon the youngest daughter of this union, Sophia, that Duke George William cast an eye of favour. Sophia, born on October 14, 1630, was sought in marriage by Prince Adolphus John, brother of Charles X of Sweden, a widower supposed to have ill-treated his wife, and by the Catholic Duke of Parma, who wooed her

¹ After the death of her first husband she married Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg.

“RENUNCIATION OF MARRIAGE” 5

by proxy.¹ Then George William came on the scene, and eventually secured her consent to an engagement, which for a while was to be kept secret. When the time came for the formal betrothal, however, George William could not bring himself to face matrimony ; and, in desperation, besought his youngest brother, Ernest Augustus, to take his place, undertaking in return to make a settlement of some of his revenues, promising never to marry, and to leave his territories to the bridegroom and his heirs for ever.

George William's "Renunciation of Marriage" is a document so unique that it deserves a place here—

"Having perceived the urgent necessity of taking into consideration how our House of this line may best be provided with heirs and be perpetuated in the future ; yet having been and remaining up to the present date both unable and unwilling in my own person to engage in any marriage contract, I have rather induced my brother, Ernest Augustus, to declare that, on condition of receiving from me a renunciation of

¹ "The Electress Sophia told me she was once like to have been married to King Charles the Second, which would not have been worse for the nation, considering how many children she had brought, to which I most sincerely agreed."—Lord Dartmouth. (Burnet : *History of His Own Time*, Vol. IV, p. 203.

marriage for myself, written and signed with my own hand, in favour of himself and his heirs male, he is prepared forthwith and without delay to enter into holy matrimony, and, as may be hoped, soon to bestow the blessing of heirs on people and country, as has been agreed and settled between him and myself ; and whereas my brother, Ernest Augustus, for reasons before mentioned, has entered into a marriage contract with her Highness Princess Sophia, which contract he purposes shortly to fulfil, so I, on my side, not only on account of my word given to and pledged, but also of my own free will and consent, desire to ratify and confirm the aforesaid conditions to my before-mentioned brother, and promise, so long as the said Princess and my brother continue in life and in the bonds of matrimony, or after their decease leave heirs male, that I neither will nor shall on any account enter into, much less carry out, any marriage contract with any person, and with nothing else than to spend what remains to me of life entirely *in cœlibatu*, to the extent that the heirs male of the before-mentioned Princess and of my brother, in whose favour this renunciation is made, may attain and succeed to the sovereignty over one or both of these our principalities. For the safer and truer assurance of all which conditions I have, with my own hand, written and signed this

PRINCESS SOPHIA OF BOHEMIA 7

renunciation and sealed it with my seal, and thereafter handed it over with all due care to my brother's own charge and keeping.

"So done at Hanover.

"(S.) GEORGE WILLIAM,
"Duke of Brunswick and Lüneburg.¹

"April 11th-21st, 1658."

There was a violent scene when the news was told to the third brother, John Frederick, who said that the reversion of the lady's hand—and, incidentally, of Lüneburg—should first have been offered to him; indeed, he was so angry that he tried to snatch the written instrument from Ernest Augustus, to the great amusement of George William, who stood aside while the younger men struggled.

Sophia was wounded by the defection of the only suitor who had engaged her affections—George William was a handsome, agreeable man,²

¹ This free translation of the original is taken from Mr. H. Forrester's translation of the *Memoirs of Sophia, Electress of Hanover* (London, 1888), pp. 73-75.

² "She had seen her future husband [George William] as a boy in Holland, and he had made a considerable impression upon her when he visited Heidelberg in the course of the first year of her residence there. He danced superbly, played the guitar, and had beautiful hands. Ernest, on his part, sent Sophia compositions of Francisco Corbetti,

but she was in her twenty-eighth year and could not expect many more proposals, and, what probably weighed with her more, she was far from happy at her brother's court ; so, with an affectation of indifference, dictated by *pique*, she accepted Ernest Augustus, her senior by a year, as her husband : " A good establishment is all I care for, and if this is secured by the younger brother the choice is a matter of indifference to me." This marriage, which took place at Heidelberg in the autumn of 1658, was the happiest accident for the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg, for, owing to a series of unforeseen events, in little more than half a century, the son of Sophia sat on the throne of Britain.

Though George William had felt so averse to matrimony that he paid a heavy price to escape marriage with Sophia, he was later to find he was not invulnerable to love's shafts, and he succumbed to the charms of Eleanor, daughter of the Marquis D'Olbreuse, a French Huguenot expelled by Louis XIV, and a descendant of Fulques D'Esmiers, Lord of Lolbroire. The statement made by Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans, in a letter

and attempted to make them the occasion of a correspondence. But the wise Sophia did not encourage him. '*Comme il estoit le cadet de trois frères, ou ne le regarda point comme un prince bon à marier.*' " Rait : *Five Stuart Princesses*, p. 303.

to the Raugravine Louise (January 30th, 1719) that Eleanor "belongs to a very common family ; she would have been lucky had she married one of my gentlemen-in-waiting " may be dismissed as malicious misrepresentation ; and no evidence can be given to the pretty story told by Rogers in his *Table Talk* : " The Prince of Celle was in love with a girl he met in Poitiers, and sent to her to come and marry him. She sent word back that she was not the same woman—that she had suffered from small-pox. He persisted in his addresses. She came and was unaltered. Their only child married George the First."

Eleanor was beautiful, dignified, and stately ; according to an enthusiastic contemporary account "*Elle étoit à la fleur de son âge, et d'une figure à inspirer facilement de l'amour, mais si les charmes de sa personne la distinguoient du commun, les belles qualitez de son âme achevoient de lui gagner les cœurs*"¹ ; and George William, an honest fellow, would fain have married her, but for his agreement with his brother ; as it was he could only offer a morganatic alliance, which was promptly rejected.

While George William was at Brussels in 1665 still urging his suit, his elder brother, Christian Lewis, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, died, and he had to return in haste to his new dominion to

¹ *Histoire Secrette de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, p. 2.

remove his younger brother, John Frederick, who had taken possession of the duchy, basing his right on the ground, rendered plausible by the ambiguity of his father's will, that George William had tacitly renounced his succession to Lüneburg when he accepted the Duchy of Hanover.

The usurper consented to abandon his claim to Lüneburg in exchange for the Duchies of Hanover and Göttingen, his brother's former possession, and that of Grubenhagen, which was thus detached from Lüneburg. This matter more or less satisfactorily disposed of, George William returned to Brussels to pursue his suit with Mademoiselle D'Olbreuse, now fortified by an understanding with the Emperor that if he married this lady, she should one day be recognised as the Sovereign Duchess of Celle. Assured of this concession, Eleanor at last gave way, and, after being married morganatically in September, 1665—she was then in her twenty-sixth year—assumed the title of Lady von Harburg, taking the name from an estate settled on her by the Duke. The union was very happy, and there was issue four children, of whom only one, born on September 15th, 1666, grew to maturity, the ill-fated Sophia Dorothea. The affectionate husband, as a rule an easy-going man, was persistent in his efforts to have his wife recognised as his duchess, and in the end he was

successful : in 1674 the Emperor raised Eleanor to the rank and title of Reichsgräfin (Countess of the Empire) von Wilhelmsburg, Wilhelmsburg being the name of her property between Hamburg and Harburg ; and later he granted a patent of legitimacy for Sophia Dorothea, with permission for her to bear the arms of Brunswick, if she married a prince.

These proceedings perturbed Ernest Augustus, who began to fear that his brother might break his compact ; and, indeed, it was generally believed that he would do so if one of his sons had survived. It was known at Iburg, where Ernest Augustus was domiciled after 1662 when he succeeded to the dignity and emoluments of the secular see of Osnabrück, that George William had determined to secure the ducal title for his wife ; and Ernest Augustus, well advised, decided to temper grace with diplomacy. If the latter refused his consent it was obviously possible that his elder brother might possibly do without it, and decline to carry out the engagement to leave his territories to Ernest Augustus, who, however, realised that by putting no further obstacles forward, he might easily, as matters stood at the moment, secure a confirmation of the deed of settlement. " My brother's French madame is not a jot the more his wife for being his duchess, but she has a dignity

the more, and therewith may rest content," he reasoned; so, after demanding and securing further concessions, he permitted the marriage with the right hand of George William with Eleanor in 1676; four years after which, at the Emperor's instigation, the Estates of Germany recognised her as Sovereign Duchess of Lüneburg-Celle.

The succession to the Duchy of Lüneburg-Celle was thus in 1676 assured to Ernest Augustus and his heirs, but the future of Hanover still hung in the balance. George William had been compelled to treat with his brother, John Frederick, to surrender the Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg, and he had finally settled the matter by transferring to the latter the Duchy of Hanover. After the death of his father in 1641, John Frederick, being the third son, inherited no territory, and as there was nothing to keep him at Celle, he had spent many years travelling, with George William to Vienna, and alone in Switzerland, Italy, France, and Holland, where he made the acquaintance of the Dutch Admiral Van Tromp, with whom he visited England. In 1652 at Augsburg it chanced that his chaplain entered into a theological controversy with the Jesuits, was convinced by their arguments and became a Roman Catholic, and soon after John Frederick followed his example. Thereafter

a welcome guest at Versailles, he accepted a subsidy from Louis XIV of 480,000 thalers, and in return supported France with troops, which he provided out of the money raised by additional taxes and a brandy monopoly.¹ This independent course aroused protest, but John Frederick would tolerate no intervention, even from the Emperor : "*Ich bin Kaiser in meinem Lande*" ("I am Emperor in my own state") was his invariable reply. At the age of forty-three, in 1668, he had married Benedicta Henrietta Philippina, daughter of the Count Palatine Edward (son of the Winter King of Bohemia), and a niece of Ernest Augustus's wife, Sophia. But even as his accession to the Duchy of Hanover had not quenched his passion for travel—he paid his third visit to Italy in 1667—so even his marriage could not keep him at home. Halliday suggests that, having adopted the Catholic religion, the Duke found his residence in a Protestant country disagreeable;² but this is mere surmise, which finds no support in the local authorities. "In Hanover," says Vehse, "the Roman Catholic religion, of which no trace had been visible for a hundred years, was not reintroduced, and to this Protestant state came the

¹ Vehse : *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 38.

² *The House of Guelph*, p. 137.

Apostolic Vicar and Bishop of Morocco, the Chevalier Valerio Maccioni ; mass was said in the Palace church, Italian singers sang in the choir, and Capucine monks wandered on the banks of the Leiner. Many courtiers followed the example of their duke, and they in turn influenced the court-servants, who in turn were imitated by many citizens and country-folk.”¹

However this may have been, in 1679 John Frederick sent his wife and daughters to France, and started for Rome where he was to meet his brother, Ernest Augustus. He got no further than Augsburg, however, where he died suddenly on December 17th. As he left no son, his dominions passed to Ernest Augustus, whose sole recorded comment on hearing of the news of his brother's demise was, “ *Je suis aise que ce n'est pas moy qui sois mort* ” (“ I am glad it is not I who am dead ”).

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

OF THE HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK-CELLE FROM THE ACCESSION
OF ERNEST THE CONFESSOR.²

ERNEST, “THE CONFESSOR,” *b.* 1497 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1520 ; *m.* 1528 Sophia, daughter of Henry, Duke of Mecklenburg (1507-1541) ; *d.* 1546.

¹ *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 35.

² This is based upon the elaborate “ Genealogical and Necrologica

Issue—

1. FRANCIS OTTO (*see below*).
2. FREDERICK, *b.* 1532, *d.* 1553.
3. HENRY, *b.* 1533; Duke of Dannenburg, 1559;
m. 1569 Ursula, daughter of Francis, Duke of
Engern and Westphalia (1552-1620); *d.* 1598.
From him descended the ducal House of
Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel.
4. MARGARET, *b.* 1534; *m.* 1549 John, Count of
Mansfeldt; *d.* 1596.
5. WILLIAM (*see below*).
6. URSULA, *b.* 1536, *d.* 1558.
7. CATHERINE, *b.* and *d.* 1537.
8. ELIZABETH URSULA, *b.* 1539; *m.* 1558 Otto, Count
of Schaumberg, *d.* 1586.
9. MAGDALENE, *b.* 1540; *m.* 1561 Arnold, Count of
Bentheim; *d.* 1586.
10. SOPHIA, *b.* 1541; *m.* 1562 Poppe XVIII, Count of
Henneberg; *d.* 1631.

FRANCIS OTTO (third son of Duke Ernest), *b.* 1530; Duke
of Brunswick-Celle, 1546; *m.* 1559 Elizabeth-Magdalene,
daughter of Joachim II, Elector of Brandenburg (*d.* 1595);
d. 1559, without issue.

WILLIAM, "THE PIOUS" (youngest son of Duke Ernest),
b. 1535; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1559; *m.* Dorothea,
daughter of Christian III, King of Denmark (1546-1617);
d. 1592.

Issue—

1. SOPHIA, *b.* 1563; *m.* 1579 George-Frederick, Margrave
of Brandenburg; *d.* 1639.
2. ERNEST (*see below*).
3. ELIZABETH, *b.* 1565; *m.* 1585 Frederick, Count of
Hohenlohe; *d.* 1621.

Tables of the Ancient and Most Illustrious House of Brunswick-
Lüneburg" appended to Sir Andrew Halliday's *General History of
the House of Guelph*, 1821. The *Stammtafel der regierenden Fürsten
aus dem Welfenhouse und ihrer Vorfahren*, compiled by Herr H. Böttger
(Hanover) has also been consulted.

4. CHRISTIAN (*see below*).
5. AUGUSTUS (*see below*).
6. DOROTHEA, *b.* 1570 ; *m.* 1586 Charles, Palatine of Birkenfeld ; *d.* 1649.
7. CLARA, *b.* 1571 ; *m.* 1593 William, Count of Schwartzburg ; *d.* 1658.
8. ANNE URSULA, *b.* 1572, *d.* 1601.
9. MARGARET, *b.* 1573 ; *m.* 1599 John-Casimir, Duke of Saxe-Coburg ; *d.* 1643.
10. FREDERICK (*see below*).
11. MARIA, *b.* 1575 ; *d.* 1610.
12. MAGNUS, *b.* 1577 ; *d.* 1632.
13. GEORGE (*see below*).
14. JOHN, *b.* 1583 ; *d.* 1628.
15. SIBYL, *b.* 1584 ; *m.* 1617 Julius-Ernest, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel ; *d.* 1652.

ERNEST II (eldest son of Duke William), *b.* 1564 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle 1592 ; *d.* 1611.

CHRISTIAN (second son of Duke William), *b.* 1566 ; Bishop of Minden, 1599 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1611 ; *d.* 1633.

AUGUSTUS (third son of Duke William), *b.* 1568 ; Bishop of Ratzburg, 1611 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1633 ; *d.* 1636.

On the death of Augustus, by arrangement between the two surviving brothers, Hanover was detached from Brunswick-Celle, and created an independent duchy. The states were re-united in 1705 under Elector George Lewis.

FREDERICK (fourth son of Duke William), *b.* 1574 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1636 ; *d.* 1648.

GEORGE (sixth son of Duke William), *b.* 1582 ; *m.* 1617 Anne Eleanor, daughter of Louis V, Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt (1601-1659) ; Duke of Hanover, 1636 ; *d.* 1641.

Issue—

1. MAGDALENE, *b.* and *d.* 1618.
2. CHRISTIAN LEWIS (*see below*).
3. GEORGE WILLIAM (*see below*).
4. JOHN FREDERICK (*see below*).
5. SOPHIA AMELIA, *b.* 1628 ; *m.* 1643 Frederick III,
King of Denmark ; *d.* 1685.
6. ERNEST AUGUSTUS (*see below*).
7. DOROTHEA MAGDALENE (twin with Ernest Augustus)
b. 1629 ; *d.* 1630.
8. ANNE ELEANOR, *b.* 1630 ; *d.* 1636.

CHRISTIAN LEWIS (eldest son of Duke George), *b.* 1622,
Duke of Hanover, 1641-1648 ; Duke of Brunswick-
Celle, 1648 ; *m.* 1653 Dorothea, daughter of Philip, Duke of
Holstein-Glückstadt (1636-1689) ; *d.* 1665.

GEORGE WILLIAM (second son of Duke George), *b.* 1624 ;
Duke of Hanover, 1648-1665 ; Duke of Brunswick-Celle, 1665 ;
m. 1665 Eleanor d'Olbreuse (1639-1722) ; *d.* 1705.

Issue—

SOPHIA DOROTHEA, *b.* 1666 ; *m.* 1682 George Lewis,
Hereditary Prince of Hanover ; *d.* 1726.

JOHN FREDERICK (third son of Duke George), *b.* 1625 ;
Duke of Hanover, 1665 ; *m.* 1668 Benedicta Henrietta
Philippina, daughter of Edward, Count Palatine of the Rhine
(1652-1730) ; *d.* 1679.

Issue—

1. ANNE SOPHIA, *b.* 1670 ; *d.* 1671.
2. CHARLOTTE FELICITAS, *b.* 1671 ; *m.* 1696 Reinald,
Duke of Medina and Reggio ; *d.* 1710.
3. HENRIETTA MARIA JOSEPHA, *b.* 1672 ; *d.* 1678.
4. WILHELMINA AMELIA, *b.* 1673 ; *m.* 1699 Joseph,
King of the Romans.

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ERNEST AUGUSTUS (fourth son of Duke George), *b.* 1629 ; *m.* 1658 Sophia, daughter of Frederick V, Elector of Palatine, and King of Bohemia, and Elizabeth, Princess of Great Britain (1630-1714) ; Bishop of Osnabrück, 1662 ; Duke of Hanover, 1679 ; created Elector, 1692 ; *d.* 1698.

Issue—

1. GEORGE LEWIS (*see below*).
2. FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, *b.* 1661 ; *d.* 1690.
3. MAXIMILIAN WILLIAM, *b.* 1666 ; *d.* 1726.
3. SOPHIA CHARLOTTE, *b.* 1668 ; *m.* 1684 Frederick I, King of Prussia ; *d.* 1705.
5. CHARLES PHILIP, *b.* 1669 ; *d.* 1690.
6. CHRISTIAN, *b.* 1671 ; *d.* 1703.
7. ERNEST AUGUSTUS, *b.* 1674 ; Regent of Hanover, 1714 ; created Duke of York and Albany in the English Peerage, 1716 ; Bishop of Osnabrück, 1716 ; *d.* 1728.

GEORGE LEWIS (eldest son of Elector Ernest Augustus), *b.* 1660 ; *m.* 1682 Sophia Dorothea, daughter of George William, Duke of Celle (1666-1726) ; Elector of Hanover, 1698 ; inherited Dukedom of Brunswick-Celle, 1705 ; King of Great Britain and Ireland, 1714 ; *d.* 1727.

Issue—

1. GEORGE AUGUSTUS (*see below*).
2. SOPHIA DOROTHEA, *b.* 1687 ; *m.* 1706 Frederick William, Prince of Prussia ; *d.* 1757.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS (son of Elector George Lewis), *b.* 1683 ; *m.* 1705 Caroline of Anspach ; created Prince of Wales, 1714 ; succeeded his father as Elector of Hanover and King of Great Britain and Ireland, 1727 ; *d.* 1760, leaving issue.



From a portrait in the Fürstenhaus at Herrenhausen

ERNEST AUGUSTUS, ELECTOR OF HANOVER

CHAPTER II

THE PARENTS OF GEORGE LEWIS (AFTERWARDS GEORGE I)

ERNEST AUGUSTUS, the "Gentleman Ernest" of Carlyle,¹ the fourth son of George, Duke of Celle, was born in 1629. As his elder brothers had done before him, he studied at Marburg; after which he made the grand tour, visiting Holland, England, France, Italy, and such less frequented places as

¹ "Her husband has the title of the Gentleman of Germany, a graceful and comely Prince, both afoot and on horseback, civil to strangers beyond compare, infinitely kind and beneficent to people in distress, and known in the world as a valiant and experienced soldier. I had the honour to see his troops, which without controversy are as good men and commanded by as expert officers as any are in Europe. . . . He is a gracious Prince to his people, and keeps a very splendid Court, having in his stables, for the use of himself and his children, no less than fifty-two sets of coach-horses. He himself is Lutheran, but as his subjects are Christians of different persuasions, nay, and some of them Jews too, so both in his Court and army he entertains gentlemen of various opinions and countries, as Italian abbots, and gentlemen that serve him [amongst them I found brave Steel-hand Gorda, Colonel of an excellent regiment of horse, Grimes, Hamilton, Talbot, and others of our King's subjects], and many Calvinist French officers."—William Ker: *Remarks on the Government of Several Parts of Germany*, 1688; pp. 113-114.

"Elector Ernst, fit to be called Gentleman Ernst, the politest of men, was chief Lord."—Carlyle: *Frederick the Great*, Book I, Chap. 3.

Madrid, Malta, and Sicily, accompanied by his tutor, George Christopher von Hammerstein.¹ In 1646 he was appointed Coadjutor at Madgeburg, and when, two years later, by the Peace of Westphalia, this was ceded to Brandenburg, the young Prince was compensated for his loss by the gift of the reversion to the far more valuable see of Osnabrück. He at once took up his residence at Osnabrück, and when he succeeded to the bishopric in November 1662, on the death of Frank William, Count von Wartenberg, he removed his household to the Castle of Iburg.

Ernest Augustus is said to have been interested in astrology and alchemy, but it is unlikely that he pursued his studies in these abstract subjects with any great ardour ; he took his share in the wars, and was happy to be able to do so, for, as Vehse put it, he might be fond of French pleasures, but he hated the French ;² but his chief delights were travelling, hunting, good living and hard drinking, and, as we shall see, women. Building, too, was a hobby of his, and while he was at Osnabrück he rebuilt the Castle of Iburg, where he

¹ Von Hammerstein (d. 1688) was afterwards Master of the Horse to George William at Celle. His daughter, Barbara Hedwig, was a prominent figure at the Court of George I under the title of Fräulein von Neuhoff.

² Vehse: *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, vol. I, p. 54.

entertained right royally. When he succeeded to the Duchy of Hanover he gave practical proof of his religious (Lutheran) convictions by declining Louis XIV's offer to continue to him John Frederick's pension if he would turn Roman Catholic.

His wife, Sophia, at Heidelberg had acquired a knowledge of men and motives that had tinged her mind with cynicism, and she did not expect much devotion or fidelity from a husband who had been bribed to marry her. This was, perhaps, as well, for the marital conduct of Ernest Augustus was very far from satisfactory : it is said that he never forgot to treat his wife with respect, but he certainly neglected her and was openly unfaithful to her.

In those days men of adventurous character, with no means of livelihood save their swords and their wits, wandered from state to state, staying here awhile, or there, as opportunity offered for the profligate exercise of the one or the other ; and some women, more daring and less scrupulous than the rest, armed with beauty and charm, followed a like course. Such a couple were Clara Elizabeth and Maria Catherine von Meysenbuch,¹ who, well-dressed, or at least arrayed with a smartness very

¹ Clara Elizabeth von Meysenbuch, born 1648, died 1700 ; Maria Catherine von Meysenbuch, born 1655, died 1723.

noticeable in the dowdy town, appeared one day in or about the year 1671 at Osnabrück. They had been taken by their father, Count Charles Philip von Meysenbuch, to Paris in the hope that their charms might allure the King, but, warned off by the established mistresses with alarming threats of what would happen if they dared to carry out their scheme, they hastily departed from the French capital.

Now, their design was to make an impression on the Prince Bishop of Osnabrück, but, finding their purpose more difficult to attain than they anticipated, and, it is fair to assume, being unprovided with means to enable them to carry on a long siege, and, further, being utterly unprincipled, they thought to achieve their end more easily, and certainly with more comfort, as the wives of two courtiers whom their fascinations had enthralled : Maria Catherine married Major-General John von dem Bussche, and Clara Elizabeth Baron Frank Ernest von Platen.¹ These men, at this time (1673), were Governors of the young Princes, but Clara Elizabeth von Platen, the more ambitious sister, now twenty-five years of age, was not

¹ "*Le Comte de Plate, homme de peu de naissance, mais riche, et qui par son naturel vif et hardi, et par sa complaisance à entrer dans les plaisirs de son Maître, et à flater ses passions, avoit sçu s'élever à la plus haute fortune.*"—*Histoire Secrette de la Duchesse d'Hanover.*



From a portrait in the Fürstenhaus at Herrenhausen

CLARA ELIZABETH, COUNTESS VON PLATEN

content with her husband's position, and set on foot a series of intrigues that resulted in the appointment of von Platen as Prime Minister to Ernest Augustus—though it is generally supposed that while he held that office Otto von Grote was the hand that really guided the helm of state. Two years after she had come to Osnabrück Clara Elizabeth, for whom a place had been found in the household of Duchess Sophia, was the acknowledged mistress of the Prince Bishop—though, it must be confessed, she retained her supremacy by consenting to share his affections with such other ladies, including one Esther, a *femme de chambre* in the service of Sophia, as from time to time attracted his attentions.¹

Sophia bore her husband's infidelity without calling on the world to pity her. She suffered neglect and insult in silence ; and if she had a fault as a wife it was that she too easily condoned her husband's irregularities, and was, in respect of these matters, far too complacent, not only tolerating, but being on terms not unfriendly with the royal mistresses. This attitude, however, was

¹ "The Italian, Baleoti, does not claim to be a brother of the King of England, but his sister declares she is the sister of the King. Her mother once proposed to send her to my uncle, but he answered that the lady had bestowed her favours on so many gallants that he was not by any means sure that the little girl was his."—Extract from a letter from the Duchess of Orleans, March 24, 1718.

not the result of weakness of character, but rather of indifference to the conduct of a man for whom she had no very warm feeling. According to all accounts she was a woman in a thousand; and the accuracy of this description of her is not dependent only on the reports of contemporary memoirists, but can be proved at this day by a perusal of her voluminous correspondence, wherein is to be detected her intelligence and her tenderness. She was an affectionate sister and aunt, and a good mother, devoted heart and soul to her children. "I know she has the courage of a man," her niece, the Duchess of Orleans, wrote, and gave instances of her fearlessness, proved conclusively by her calmness when her nightdress once caught fire, and on another occasion when a young horse in the team attached to a *calèche* took fright.

Dean Lockier, who knew her well, wrote her down as "a woman of good sense and excellent conversation," though he regretted that "she sat very loose in her religious principles, and used to take a particular pleasure in setting a heretic, whenever she could meet with such, and one of her chaplains a-disputing together."¹ This particular humour could scarcely be expected to appeal to a clergyman; but the layman may find some comfort in the fact that Sophia was free from

¹ Spence: *Anecdotes*, Vol. I, p. 169.

superstition and narrow-mindedness, and was tolerant of all religious sects. Her amusements, certainly, were very harmless, consisting of needle-work—the embroidering of altar-cloths, for choice—and walking. This love of walking, it may be mentioned, was inherited from his mother, by George Lewis ; and Marshal von der Schulenburg, a brother of the Duchess of Kendal, found his life in London very fatiguing, as he had to walk with the King in the gardens every evening for three or four hours.

Though her intelligence was beyond question, her husband never consulted her on matters of state, and she was entirely without influence in Hanoverian affairs, not only during the life of Ernest Augustus, but also when her son succeeded to the Electorate. “*Elle fut toujours tenue éloignée et sans crédit dans les affaires, et par son mari et par son fils,*”¹ wrote von Ilten ; and, indeed, it was only after the death of Ernest Augustus, when the question of the succession to the English throne came into the realm of practical politics, that she became a personage of international importance. This change was inevitable since it was in her, and not in her son, that the inheritance was vested ; but George Lewis was careful that she should be consulted only in

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 19.

matters affecting the succession, and she was still kept at arm's-length in all that related to the home affairs of the Electorate—even her recommendations in favour of old and devoted servants were frequently ignored by him. But of the relations of Sophia and her eldest son something more will presently be said.

If she had no share in the politics of her country, however, her husband and, afterwards, her son, allowed her full sway at Court—according to von Ilten, Ernest Augustus and George Lewis “*lassoient à sa disposition tous les agrémens de leur cours, dont elle faisoit l'ornement et les honneurs, avec cette dignité et noblesse accompagnée d'aisance, qui en fait l'agrément, et qui est si difficile aux princesses d'attraper.*”¹ For the successful mistress of a royal household she had all the essential qualities in abundance, she was *très grande dame*, she had good looks, gracious manners, and practical common-sense ; and she was acquainted with several languages, and spoke, besides German, English, Dutch, French and Italian. She was much interested in philosophy, though in knowledge of the subject she was not the equal of her sister, Elizabeth of Bavaria ; and she liked to assemble around her women of refinement, and men distinguished in literature, art and science,

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 19.

the most prominent of whom at the Court of Hanover was Leibnitz.

In youth she was handsome, with a fine figure and complexion, masses of dark brown hair, large dark blue eyes, white skin, and small hands ; and in old age she preserved her looks. "*On peut voir une belle vieille*," said the Duchess of Orleans when asked how her aunt looked, "*mais jamais une vieille belle*." Burnet described her at seventy-five as having "still so much vivacity . . . the most knowing and entertaining woman of the age" ; and Toland, who saw her first in 1702, gave a most enthusiastic account of her.

"The Electress is three-and-seventy years old, which she bears so wonderfully well, that had I not many vouchers, I should scarce dare venture to relate it," he wrote. "She has ever enjoyed extraordinary health, which keeps her still very vigorous, of a cheerful countenance, and a merry disposition. She steps as firm and erect as any young lady, has not one wrinkle in her face, which is still very agreeable, nor one tooth out of her head, and reads without spectacles, as I have often seen her do, letters of a small character, in the dusk of the evening. She is as great a writer as our late Queen [Mary], and you cannot turn yourself in the Palace without meeting some monument of her industry, all the chairs of the Presence-Chamber

being wrought with her own hands. The ornaments of the altar in the Electoral chapel are all of her work. She bestowed the same favour in the Protestant abbey, or college, of Lockurn, with a thousand other instances, fitter for your lady to know and have for yourself. She is the most constant and greatest walker I ever knew, never missing a day, if it proves fair, for one or two hours, and often more, in the fine garden at Herrenhausen. She perfectly tires all those of her court who attend her on that exercise, but such as have the honour to be entertained by her in discourse. She has long been admired as a woman of incomparable knowledge in divinity, philosophy, history, and the subjects of all sorts of books, of which she has read a prodigious quantity."¹ There was undoubtedly a large element of flattery in the last sentence, but Sophia was certainly a remarkable woman.

If the relations between husband and wife left much to be desired, so did those between the father and his youngest sons ;² but while Sophia's troubles were purely domestic, the grievance of

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 66.

² The following children were born to Ernest Augustus and Sophia—

1. George Lewis (1660–1727), afterwards Elector of Hanover, and King of Great Britain and Ireland.
2. Frederick Augustus, born in 1661, General in the

the young men was, in its origin, political. It has already been shown what sacrifices the princes of this part of Germany were willing to make to preserve the unity of their territory ; and Ernest Augustus, whom many thought had no desires beyond his creature-comforts and his pleasures, was consumed by an ambition that had in it probably more of patriotism than of self-interest. He desired to secure the translation of Hanover from a duchy to the ninth Electorate of the Empire ; and for this cherished purpose he worked as unceasingly and as steadfastly as his brother George William had laboured to secure the recognition of Eleanora D'Olbreuse as Sovereign Duchess of Celle.

So soon as Ernest Augustus became Duke of Hanover he began his preparations for his *coup*,

- Imperial army, died in 1690, fighting against the Turks.
- 3. Maximilian William, born in 1666, was converted to Roman Catholicism, General in the Imperial army, died in 1726, at Vienna.
- 4. Sophia Charlotte, born in 1668, married in 1684 Frederick, afterwards King of Prussia, died in 1705.
- 5. Charles Philip, born in 1669, Colonel in the Imperial army, died in 1690, fighting against the Turks.
- 6. Christian, born in 1671, General in the Imperial army, died in 1703.
- 7. Ernest Augustus, born in 1674, afterwards Duke of York and Albany, Bishop of Osnabrück and Regent of Hanover ; died 1728.

for the furtherance of which he was prepared to make any sacrifice. Before he could approach the Emperor officially with his request, it was clear to him and his advisers that he must be able to guarantee the continued integrity of the duchy and the only way in which this could be achieved was by introducing into his dominions the principle of primogeniture, which already existed in the elder branch of his family that reigned over Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel.

The bitterest opponents of the introduction of the principle of primogeniture in the reigning family of Hanover were, not unnaturally, the five younger sons of Ernest Augustus, who thereby were despoiled of their patrimony. With one voice they cried out against what they considered the injustice ; but no one of them so vigorously as Frederick Augustus, the second son, who had a bitter quarrel with his father, which ended, as was only to be expected in a contest so unequal, in the complete discomfiture of the young man.

"Arm Güstchen wird ganz verstossen, sein Herr Vater will ihm gar kein Winterhalt mehr geben," wrote the worried mother in December, 1685, to Rudolph Adolphus, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. *"Ich lache den Tag und schreie die ganze Nacht hie über ; dem ein Kind est mir eben so lieb*

als das ander, ich habe sie alle unter mein Herz getragen, und die unglücklich sein, jammern en (einem) am meisten. Was Gott will, muss man mit zufrieden sein. Aber dieses ist ein harten Punkt, denn ich bin ein Narr mit meine Kinder." ("Poor Augustus is altogether cast out, and his father will no longer have anything to do with him. I laugh all day about it, and cry all night, for one child's as dear to me as the other, and though each has the same share of my heart, I am always most devoted to the unfortunate ones. One must endeavour not to quarrel with fate, but this is very difficult, because I am a fool with my children.") Driven from home, "Güstchen" entered the Imperial Service and died in battle in 1790, the same year as the fourth son met a similar fate.

Equally opposed to their father's scheme were the third and fifth sons, Maximilian William and Christian: the former, breaking out into open rebellion, was arrested by his father for high treason in December 1691, purchased his release by renouncing his claim to the succession, entered the Imperial army, commanded a cavalry brigade at Blenheim, and survived until 1726; the latter died in battle in 1703. The youngest, Ernest Augustus, owing to his tender years, took no part in the quarrel, and eventually was given the

bishopric of Osnabrück. There is no occasion to trace further the careers of these men, for as their eldest brother, George Lewis, had a son who survived him, they played a minor part in the annals of Hanover, and have no place in English history.

On July 1, 1683, notwithstanding the opposition, the Emperor sanctioned the introduction of the principle of primogeniture in the Hanoverian line, to come into operation on the death of Ernest Augustus ; and that Prince was now one step nearer his goal. He had, however, still many difficulties to overcome, though he had in his favour a record of loyal service to the Emperor, great wealth, that had come to him through the gold and silver mines of the Harz and the commerce, chiefly in linen and wool, of the rising trading towns in his dominions, and a well-appointed and numerous army.

The College of Princes resented his ambition, and in his own family he met with most strenuous opposition : the Wolfenbüttel branch were outraged at the bare thought that he and his heirs should take precedence of it, and George William, Duke of Celle, could only be brought to countenance the scheme after his daughter had married George Lewis. More disastrous was the attitude of the College of Electors, the members of which

refused to admit a new member. They stated that the constitution of the Empire admitted only of seven Electors. "If at the Peace of Westphalia we consented to an eighth," they said, "it was because the Palatine had been deprived of his dignity, and it had been given to the Duke of Bavaria; we have agreed to restore the Palatine to all the honours of his House, and we cannot deprive the Elector of Bavaria of what has solemnly been guaranteed to him. An eighth Electorate therefore was necessary; it was part of the price we paid for peace, a condition which was willingly submitted to, that a term might be put to the frightful war which for thirty years had brought ruin upon ruin to our towns and villages; but for the pretensions of the Duke of Hanover there is no justification and no excuse."¹ The clerical Electors put forward the further plea that the admission of a Lutheran would upset the balance of Protestantism and Catholicism.

No amount of hostility could deter Ernest Augustus from persevering with his cherished scheme, and his persistence finally overcame all opposition. He won over, or at least partially disarmed, the Catholic Electors by consenting to have a Roman Catholic Church, and engaged to admit an Apostolical Vicar in his dominions

¹ Kemble: *State Papers*, pp. 41-42.

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and to give him leave to reside at Hanover ;¹ and probably he offered bribes in other quarters. Early in 1692 he and Duke George William undertook to furnish money and troops at their own cost to assist the prosecution of the war against the Turks, and after this was brought to an end, of the war against France ; and it may be taken for granted that this offer was conditional upon the bestowal of the Electoral dignity, which the Emperor decided now to give, induced thereto partly by a desire to reward a stalwart adherent, and partly by the fear that otherwise Ernest Augustus might throw himself into the arms of Louis XIV, who had made overtures to him. Indeed, it would not have been politic longer to refuse the dignity, for Hanover could no longer be regarded as a petty state.

To the wealth of its ruler allusion has already been made, and Ernest Augustus was now so powerful that when he travelled abroad he was treated with the honours accorded to a sovereign,

¹ Pöllnitz : *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 63.

“ The most remarkable structure in Hanover is the Roman Catholic Church, which was granted to those of that communion by Ernest Augustus, that being one of the conditions which the Emperor Leopold demanded of him when he honoured it by the Electoral Dignity. *Ibid.* Pöllnitz adds that during the reign of Ernest Augustus there were many Catholics in Hanover, and that they belonged mainly to the poorer classes.

and so influential that at the negotiations prior to the Treaty of Ryswick, which he attended with his minister, no serious or sustained objection was raised to his being allowed to treat as a separate power.

On December 19 (N.S.), 1692, Otto von Grote received the investiture with the Electoral *barret* on behalf of his master, and there the matter ended for the time being, a barren honour, for not even the Emperor could induce the College of Electors to allow Ernest Augustus to take his seat amongst them. The new Elector found comfort in the facts that his title was acknowledged by all the Courts of Europe, and that he was allowed the precedence due to that rank.¹ Hanover was not represented at the College of Electors until many years later.

¹ Halliday : *House of Guelph*, p. 143.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY YEARS OF GEORGE LEWIS

GEORGE LEWIS, afterwards Elector of Hanover, and subsequently King of Great Britain and Ireland, the eldest child of Ernest Augustus, then Prince Bishop of Osnabrück, and Sophia, was born on May 28, 1660. He received the ordinary scanty education that fell to the lot of a prince in those days, when the sword was regarded as far mightier than the pen, and book-learning was at a discount ; and at the age of fifteen, when his father threw in his lot with the Allies against Louis XIV, he entered the Imperial army, serving under his father, who commanded the troops of Brunswick-Celle.¹ He was present at the battle of Consarbrück, and at the capture of Treves ; and fought in Hungary, the Moria, Germany, and Flanders, until the Peace of Nimeguen. Brave, like all the members of his house, he distinguished himself in the field, and while still in his

¹ " [The Duke of Celle], with the other two Princes of the House of Lüneburg, Hanover and Wolfenbüttel, can, upon occasion, bring into the field 36,000 soldiers, whom they keep in constant pay, and such men as I never saw better in my life."—William Ker: *Remarks on the Government of Several Parts of Germany*, 1688 ; p. 116.

GEORGE LEWIS VISITS ENGLAND 37

teens showed marked qualifications for military command.

There is little or nothing of importance in his life to record during the period when his father was Bishop of Osnabrück, but he sprang into prominence on the death of his uncle, John Frederick, in December 1679, and he temporarily left the Army, and went to Hanover to be present at the coronation, on October 12, 1680, of Ernest Augustus as Duke of Hanover. As George Lewis, now in his twenty-first year, was heir-apparent to this duchy, and would in all probability sooner or later inherit the Lüneburg-Celle dominions, his future was a matter of moment, and it was thought that, in the interest of the direct line of succession, the time was ripe to find him a wife.

Early in December 1680, Duke Ernest Augustus sent George Lewis—he was always called George Lewis on the Continent, though George, *tout court*, in this country—to England, with the idea of marrying him to Princess Anne, the daughter of James, Duke of York (afterwards James II, King of England). On his arrival he was well received, as may be concluded from a letter he wrote to his mother from London on December 30—

“After wishing Your Serene Highness a very Happy New Year, I will not delay letting you

know that I arrived here on December 6, having remained one day at anchor at Greenwich till M. Beck went on shore to take a house for me. He did not fail to find out Uncle Robert [Prince Rupert] and let him know of my arrival at Greenwich, who did not delay telling King Charles. His Majesty immediately appointed me apartments at Whitehall. M. Beck requested Uncle Robert to excuse me ; but King Charles, when he spoke thus, insisted that it should absolutely be so, for he would treat me *en cousin*, and after that no more could be said. Therefore M. Cotterel came on the morrow to find me out with a barque of the King, and brought me therein to Whitehall. I had not been there more than two hours when Milord Hamilton came to take me to the King, who received me most obligingly. Uncle Robert had preceded me, and was at Court when I saluted King Charles. In making my obeisance to the King, I did not omit to give him the letter of Your Serene Highness, after which he spoke of Your Highness, and said ‘ that he remembered you very well.’ When he had talked with me some time he went to the Queen [Catherine of Braganza], and as soon as I arrived he made me kiss the hem of Her Majesty’s petticoat (*qui l’on fit baiser la jupe à la reine*).

“ The next day I saw the Princess of York [the

Princess Anne], and I saluted her by kissing her, with the consent of the King. The day after, I went to visit Uncle Robert, who received me in bed, for he has a malady in his leg which makes him very often keep his bed. It appears that it is so without any pretext, and that he has to take care of himself. He had not failed of coming to see me one day.

"All the *milords* came to see me *sans pretendre la main chez moi*. Milord Grey came to me very often indeed.

"They cut off the head of Lord Stafford yesterday, and made no more ado about it than if they had chopped off the head of a pullet.

"I have no more to tell Your Serene Highness, wherefore I conclude, and remain

Your very humble son and servant,

"GEORGE LEWIS."¹

At first it appeared more than probable that the alliance desired by Ernest Augustus for his son and heir would be sanctioned by Charles II ; and though James, then living in compulsory seclusion at Holyrood, was not in favour of the marriage, he could not venture to carry his objection so far as active opposition. It is impossible, with any

¹ W. H. Wilkins: *Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, Vol. I, pp. 58-59.

assurance of accuracy, to gauge Anne's feelings in the matter, for there are extant many contradictory statements. No one, however, has been so bold as to declare that the prospect of marrying this suitor elated her ; and though she may not have offered any opposition to the proposed union, she can scarcely have been delighted by it.

The Hereditary Prince of Hanover, indeed, was scarcely a young man to allure any girl. He was below the average height, with an awkward figure, and entirely devoid of good looks ; his manners were deplorable, and not even a brief course of training at Versailles, the home of elegance, had wrought any improvement ; while his unprepossessing appearance was not redeemed by any agreeable accomplishment. Such virtues as he had, honesty and truthfulness, were not apparent on the surface, and even if they had been, were scarcely in themselves likely to turn the scale in his favour in the heart of a girl of fifteen. His reputation for bravery was his sole asset in the court of love.

It has been said, however, that at first Anne appeared more or less indifferent, thinking, perhaps, that one political marriage might be no more objectionable than another ; but that after a while she would have nothing to do with him.

The story goes that George Lewis did not push his suit very vigorously, and that William of Orange caused it to be conveyed to her that this hesitation, which actually came from shyness, arose from a distaste for her person that he conceived at first sight. This, if true, would account for the animosity with which Anne treated George Lewis throughout her life. Whether her Royal Highness's determination to have nothing more to do with her suitor would have prevailed if the affair had gone on need not be discussed, for, to the great surprise of himself and all concerned, George was in March (1681) recalled by his father.

It has been stated that George, calling at the Hague *en route* for England, confided the purpose of his visit to William of Orange, and that, as soon as his guest had left, William left no stone unturned to defeat this object, by setting on foot a network of intrigue in the household of Princess Anne, at Celle, and, through the (presumedly purchased) instrumentality of Baroness von Platen, at Hanover. Since secrecy is the very essence of such manoeuvres, it is impossible to say how far William went in his desire to prevent the contemplated alliance, or, indeed, if he made any attempt ; but it is certain that such a marriage could not have met with his approval, since it would in all probability interfere with his own aims ; if it took

place, and Mary, Princess of Orange, died without children before her father, William would at once be put aside, in the matter of the succession to the English throne, in favour of Princess Anne and her husband.

It is, indeed, unnecessary to enquire into the actions of the astute Dutch Prince, because there was another reason, sufficient in itself, to explain the recall of George Lewis to Hanover.

It cannot be doubted that the idea had long since occurred to Hanoverian statesmen that a marriage between the Electoral Prince and Sophia Dorothea would be politic, since it would reunite that province with the Duchy of Celle. Before any advance could be made to the Princess's parents, however, it would be necessary to overcome the prejudice of the Elector and his wife to the idea of an alliance between their son and the daughter of the hated Eleanora d'Olbreuse. In the meantime, however, Duke Antony Ulrich, a younger brother of Rudolph Augustus, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, came upon the scene anxious to secure Sophia Dorothea's large dowry for his son, Augustus Frederick, and he was successful in promoting an engagement between the lad, aged sixteen, and the girl, aged five. However, when in 1676 Augustus Frederick was killed at the siege of Philipsburg, the hopes of the

Hanoverian ministers ran high, and, now aided by the Countess von Platen, they re-commenced their intrigues, which, for the time being, were shattered when George Lewis went to England on a matrimonial issue. Duke Antony Ulrich, having had the prize in his grasp, was not the man to forego it without a struggle, and he proposed that his eldest surviving son should take the other's place, a suggestion to which Duke George William, disliking the idea, was at first averse, though finally he gave way, stipulating, however, that there should be no betrothal until his daughter was sixteen years of age, and that, until then, the matter should be kept secret.

The news of this project became known at Hanover on the eve of the eventful birthday ; and it was now or never for the success of the intriguers. They had already brought their heaviest artillery into play while George Lewis was in England, intimating to Ernest Augustus—and here perhaps, the suggestion coming at this time, the curious may see the hand of William of Orange—that if this alliance took place the estates of Celle-Lüneburg and of Hanover would consent to the introduction of the principle of primogeniture. Their final attack carried all before it, and on the very day before Sophia Dorothea attained the age of sixteen, the Duchess Sophia went to

Celle,¹ and succeeded in securing the consent of Duke George William to the marriage, which took place on November 21, 1682.

¹ " *Le départ de l'Electrice fut si précipité, que le Prince de Wolfenbüttel et le Duc de Celle lui-même n'en purent être informez ; c'était alors dans les plus grands jours de l'été, et comme Hanover où l'Electeur faisoit sa residence, n'est éloigné de Celle, que de dix heures de chemin, l'Electrice étant partie a l'entrée de la nuit, y arriva avant le lever du soleil ; et se faisant un plaisir de surprendre le Duc de Celle, elle se fit conduire (sans permettre qu'on l'annonçât) dans l'appartement de la Duchesse, où on lui dit qu'il étoit.*"—*Histoire Secrette de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, pp. 8-9.



From an original picture in The Castle of Ahlden

SOPHIA DOROTHEA, CONSORT OF GEORGE I

CHAPTER IV

THE MARRIAGE OF GEORGE LEWIS AND SOPHIA DOROTHEA

A ROYAL marriage is not usually a short cut to happiness for the contracting parties, but there seemed at the outset no particular reason why the union between George Lewis and Sophia Dorothea should be more disastrous than the general run of such alliances. Romantic writers have made capital out of the fact that Sophia Dorothea fainted when the arrival of her future husband was announced, but not even the late Mr. W. H. Wilkins, that most stalwart defender of unhappy ladies of the blood royal, has been able to put forward any sufficient cause for the alleged aversion ; though other biographers, less scrupulously accurate, or, perhaps, less well-informed, state that the girl's heart was buried in the grave of her first *fiancé*, Augustus Frederick of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. But Augustus Frederick died when Sophia Dorothea was ten years old, and it makes too great a strain on our credulity to believe that this could conceivably influence her six years later ! The most natural explanation of the faint—if, indeed, it is worth while to enquire into the

cause of this incident—is that it was the result of excitement acting on an emotional nature.

Misrepresentations concerning the married life of Sophia Dorothea have been so numerous that it is no easy task to arrive at the truth. The story is sad enough in itself, but everything that could be done to deepen the pathos has been done, and in many accounts, instead of a truthful picture, there has been presented a narrative reminiscent of an old Surrey Theatre melodrama, where the heroine is a snow-white virgin, and everybody else in the play, with the exception of the hero, deep-dyed villains, joining hands, for no conceivable reason, to undo the virtuous heroine. Sophia has been presented as a cruel-hearted mother-in-law, and her husband, Ernest Augustus, a most detestable father-in-law ; George William, Sophia Dorothea's father, as an unnatural parent eager to connive at his daughter's disgrace, and George Lewis as a monster of depravity : even the "*böse Platen*" is introduced to bring about the *dénouement* ; and it is needless to say that the Princess's intrigue is treated as a harmless flirtation with an old playfellow of her childhood. Their estimates of character are the outcome of unenlightened prejudice or an overpowering love of romance, for the alleged conspiracy has no foundation in fact.

The story of Sophia Dorothea has been made the subject of many books. Duke Antony Ulrich of Wolfenbüttel told it in a supplementary volume to his *Römischen Octavia* in 1707, and it has been related by other contemporaries, including the anonymous author of the *Histoire Secrette de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, usually attributed to Baron von Pöllnitz, and Major Müller, in what Dr. Ward rightly calls a "venomous concoction," entitled, *Memoirs of Sophia Dorothea*. Other publications may be passed over until 1900, when, under the title of *The Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, the late Mr. W. H. Wilkins printed the Königsmark correspondence, hitherto available in print only in the corrupt and incomplete versions of Palmblad and Count Schulenburg-Klosterröde. The letters, preserved in the University Library of Lund, Sweden, have been proved to be authentic, and Mr. Wilkins rendered yeoman's service in making them generally accessible; but, unfortunately, as the title of his book suggests, he has treated the subject in a romantic vein rather than in the cold dry light of history. It is obvious throughout that he holds a brief for the defence, and though he cannot, in the face of the letters he prints, plead for his client "not guilty," he accompanies his admission of guilt with so many extenuating circumstances that the guilty woman

seems to be the only innocent person in the episode. If Mr. Wilkins is right, the Electress Sophia was a most villainous, heartless intriguer; but by everyone except defenders of her daughter-in-law and in all other relations of life, she is accepted as a woman of good character, sterling honesty, and tenderness! Three years after the appearance of *The Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, a more judicial pronouncement was made by Dr. Ward in his Goupil Memoir on *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*.

It had frequently been impressed upon Sophia Dorothea by her mother that the Duchess Sophia was the enemy of the Celle-Lüneburg branch of the family; and this doubtless created in her mind a prejudice against George Lewis. The Prince, unfortunately, was not the man to win a young girl's heart; his appearance, already described, was not prepossessing, nor was his character likely to attract love. If we may accept the testimony of De la Roque, Sir William Dutton Colt's secretary, who had no reason to be other than impartial, Sophia Dorothea was a desirable bride, pretty, graceful, accomplished, elegant and agreeable; but George Lewis's consent to the marriage was secured, not by these qualities, but by the prospect of enjoying her great fortune: he was not a man desirous of marriage, for his

active habits made him prefer hunting and the camp to the matrimonial hearth. At the outset, therefore, an intelligent onlooker could discern incompatibility of temperament. He was cold and reserved, not given to any show of feeling : she was a creature of sentiment ; he was probably incapable of any deep emotion : her whole nature cried out for love. What might have happened had the young people been constantly together none can say ; it is doubtful if contiguity would have made their relations more harmonious, but the chance never offered, for George Lewis was more frequently away on military service than at home. After the birth of her first child, George Augustus (afterwards George II of England) in October 1683, there was some approach to tenderness on the husband's side ; but this, unfortunately, was nipped in the bud by a summons to him to rejoin the Imperial Army.

No compilation on the marriage under consideration so clearly displays the malice or ignorance of the writer as the *Histoire Secrete de la Duchesse d'Hanover*. There, on page 23, is a passage made up of a tissue of misrepresentations. "*Quoique Sophie eut donné un fils à son époux, ce Prince n'en avoit pas moins de froideur pour elle,*" it runs. "*Ce n'est pas tout, l'Electeur n'avoit pour elle qu'une politesse pleine de froideur ; et l'Electrice*

même, toute généreuse qu'elle se montrait pour tous autres, lui faisait souvent ressentir, par de piquans mépris, l'antipathie naturelle qu'elle avoit pour le sang de la Duchesse de Celle." ("Even when Sophia Dorothea had presented her husband with a son, this Prince was not less cold to her. . . . Nor was this all. The Elector treated her with the barest courtesy; and the Electress, good-natured as she showed herself to all others, to her daughter-in-law made it very clear that she entertained a very strong antipathy to the offspring of the Duchess of Celle.")

The lie has already been given to the statement of the author of the *Histoire Secrete de la Duchesse d'Hanover* concerning the Duchess Sophia; and the description of the attitude of Ernest Augustus to his daughter-in-law is also inaccurate. Indeed, at the time in question the Duke showed an affectionate interest in her, won from a state that may be described as "armed neutrality" by her pretty face and vivacious manner.

It seems, indeed, to have been this change of front on the part of Ernest Augustus that wrought Sophia Dorothea so much harm. She was pleased with her conquest, but as a matter of fact, it appears to have been the most unfortunate thing that could have happened, for it roused the Countess von Platen to take action against her.

The Countess, as we know, had promoted the marriage of the Hereditary Prince with Sophia Dorothea, and it will not be doing that lady an injustice to assume that, apart from the (conjectured) bribes of William of Orange, it suited her interests to do so. No woman was more covetous of power, and she assumed that whereas if the bride was Anne, a Princess of England, with only one life between her and the throne of Great Britain, her influence might wane, with a girl of sixteen, the daughter of the hated Eleanora D'Olbreuse, as the wife of the heir-apparent to the dukedom of Hanover, her position would be vastly strengthened.

The Countess made the mistake of supposing that Sophia Dorothea would submit to be trampled upon, and she was soon made aware of the fact that the young Princess had a goodly conceit of herself and her parentage: indeed, no sooner did Sophia Dorothea come to Hanover than she unhesitatingly showed her disdain of and her aversion to the royal mistress—doubtless, much to the surprise of that person, accustomed to the good-natured tolerance of the Duchess Sophia. Of the annoyance of "the Platen" at this unexpected attitude there can be no question; but she realised it was a matter of no importance so long as the Princess was merely on formal terms with her

parents-in-law and not in favour with her husband. When, however, Ernest Augustus showed himself attracted by the Princess, it was clear to the Countess that the balance of power might be disturbed ; and, since her position depended entirely on the Duke's favour, she felt it incumbent on her, so the story goes, to fight for her own hand. After the manner of her kind, her thoughts turned to the weapons of sex : she must find a woman to control George Lewis !

So far this may be accepted as a truthful picture of the intentions of Madame von Platen, who, it is fair to assume, was not called *die böse* (the wicked ") without reason. But " the Platen " may have had evil designs, and yet have been unable to carry them out ; and, where the authorities are unreliable, it is essential that every statement must be carefully weighed.

Madame von Platen's sister, Maria von dem Bussche, had had an intrigue with George Lewis at some time before his marriage, since when he had shown an unexpected fidelity to his wife. So much is admitted on all hands ; but now comes a narrative put forward by the defenders of Sophia Dorothea. After 1685 George Lewis was more at Hanover than in the earlier years of his married life, and *then*, runs the story, the Countess seized the opportunity to throw her sister, now a widow,

in his way : in vain, however, for whether the cause was marital faithfulness or a dislike to renew his connection with the woman, not all the overtures of Madame von dem Bussche could elicit any advance on his part. The Countess was not a woman to admit defeat because her first move failed, and she made another, and this time a successful essay to provide the Prince with a mistress. Here let Mr. Wilkins, the latest spokesman of the romanticists, carry on the story. " The lady whom she chose as a decoy was Ermengarda Melusina von [der] Schulenburg, the daughter of an illustrious and noble house. . . . The young lady had only recently arrived at Hanover, and had stayed at Monplaisir. . . . The Countess introduced her to George Lewis on his return from Hungary. . . . His wife was openly neglected for this new rival. . . . About this time the Countess [von] Platen consoled Madame [von dem] Bussche for the loss of her power over the Crown Prince by marrying her in second wedlock to General Weyke [Weyhe]. . . . Bussche had only been dead a few months. . . . Countess [von] Platen resolved to make her sister's nuptials the occasion of proclaiming, more or less informally, George Lewis's infatuation for Schulenburg, and with a refinement of cruelty she tried to induce Sophia Dorothea to be present. . . . The great personages

at the feast, far eclipsing the bride and bridegroom, were Ermengarda Melusina, decked in jewels, and her lover, George Lewis, who paid her so much attention that everyone noticed it. . . . When Knesebeck [the Princess's *confidante*] returned to the Palace she found Sophia Dorothea waiting up for her in great agitation ; nor was she content until she had had a recital of the whole affair, and learned that she was openly flouted in the capital of the Duchy." ¹

The Duchess Sophia, so the story continues, had schooled herself to bear the open infidelity of Ernest Augustus ; but Sophia Dorothea, an indolent but jealous creature, could not bear in silence the insult her husband put upon her. She appealed to the Duchess, who could only advise her to ignore the indignity ; she begged to be permitted to return to Celle, but that was not allowed ; and so, fuming with anger, she returned to the dull Hanoverian palace that was her home.

It is, indeed, a pathetic picture, as drawn by Sophia Dorothea's defenders : the poor, innocent, neglected wife, and the scandalous, shameless rake of a husband ! No wonder the ill-treated lady turned for sympathy to a handsome gentleman who offered it, himself a notorious *roué* : who under the circumstances shall blame her ? But before

¹ *The Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, Vol. I, pp. 114-116.

passing judgment let the other side of the shield be revealed! What if, so far from being the injured innocent lady she is portrayed, Sophia Dorothea was "*eine höchst leichtfertige und putzsüchtige Coquette*,"¹ a kindly translator may say, a finished coquette, who had her *affaires* before Königsmark came to Hanover, especially during her trip to Italy in 1685? What if there is no evidence that George Lewis was unfaithful to his wife? Even the enunciation of these questions will astonish those who have without question accepted the statements of the majority of the chroniclers of this unfortunate marriage.

Every narrator of the attempts of the Countess von Platen to bring about a renewal of the relations between the Prince and Maria von dem Bussche is careful to state that these took place when the lady was a widow. Such unanimity on one point, when on all others there is disagreement, carries conviction even to the sceptical. But General von dem Bussche was killed at the battle of Neerwinden, *July 19, 1693!* The importance of this date is at once clear. If Madame von dem Bussche did not make amorous overtures to George Lewis until after her husband's death, and it was only after having rejected these that the Prince's

¹ Erich, Count Kielmansegg: *Briefe des Herzogs Ernst August*, p. 2.

attention was attracted to Fräulein von der Schulenburg, then the accusation of infidelity to his marriage vows, hitherto regarded as proved against George Lewis, falls to the ground. Of course it may be urged that the biographers have all been wrong in alleging that Madame von dem Bussche was a widow when she attempted to reinstate herself in the Prince's good graces. However, the point is of no importance, and may be conceded ; for George Lewis's *liaison* was not with this lady but with Fräulein von der Schulenburg, and here is given a definite date for its beginning : the time of the marriage of Maria von dem Bussche with General Christian von Weyhe. *This marriage took place in 1696 !* That is to say, more than eighteen months after the disappearance of Königsmark and the confinement of Sophia Dorothea. How then can Madame von Platen have invited Sophia Dorothea to be present ? and how then can George Lewis's intrigue with the future Duchess of Kendal have driven Sophia Dorothea into Königsmark's arms ? George Lewis was doubtless no saint, but at least let this justice be done him, to admit that, anyhow on the evidence hitherto adduced, he is guiltless of all the charges hitherto brought against him !



From a portrait by Schleider in the Fürstenhaus at Herrenhausen

COUNT PHILIP CHRISTOPHER VON KÖNIGSMARK



CHAPTER V

SOPHIA DOROTHEA AND COUNT PHILIP VON KÖNIGSMARK

COUNT PHILIP CHRISTOPHER VON KÖNIGSMARK came to Hanover for the first time in March 1688. This date is of the utmost historical importance, in view of the fact that there have been writers who, dating the visit earlier, threw doubts on the legitimacy of Sophia Dorothea's daughter,¹ and so hinted at a blot on the scutcheon of the Prussian royal family. Indeed, in England there were not wanting enemies of the Hanoverian dynasty who pretended to trace in George Augustus (afterwards George II) a likeness to Königsmark : the Whigs had denied the legitimacy of the son of James II and Mary of Modena, and the Tory pamphleteers during the reign of George I were not willing to miss the opportunity to suggest a mystery as to the father of the heir to the throne.

In England during the reign of George I and for many subsequent generations, Philip was confused with his elder brother, John Charles, and even the usually well-informed Horace Walpole, writing his

¹ This daughter, called after her mother, Sophia Dorothea, was born in 1687. She married Frederick William of Prussia, and was the mother of Frederick the Great.

Reminiscences in 1788 for the edification of his "twin wives," fell into this blunder, and referred to Philip as "the famous and beautiful Count Königsmark, the charm of whose person ought not to have obliterated the memory of his vile assassination of Mr. Thynne."¹ The murderer of Mr. Thynne, Dryden's Issachar, was, of course, John Charles, who, escaping punishment, went to the Morea, and died there in 1686, leaving to Philip the vast wealth bequeathed to him by an uncle in the Venetian service.²

Most biographers state, though on what evidence is not clear, that Count Philip had spent some years of his boyhood at Celle, where he was sent to be educated, and that there he had frequently met Sophia Dorothea. It is immaterial, however, whether Sophia welcomed him as an old playmate of her childhood, or as an acceptable visitor to

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cv.

² "This day was executed Colonel Vrats, for the execrable murder of Mr. Thynne, set on by the principal, Königsmark : he went to execution, like an undaunted hero, as one that has done a friendly office for that base coward, Count Königsmark, who had hopes to marry his widow, the rich Lady Ogle, and was acquitted by a corrupt jury, and so got away. Vrats told a friend of mine, who accompanied him to the gallows, and gave him some advice, that he did not value dying of a rush, and hoped and believed God would deal with him like a gentleman."—Evelyn : *Diary*, March 10, 1682.

Hanover : what is germane to the matter is that she indulged in some degree of coquetry, incited thereto, doubtless, by a disposition that leaned to sentiment, perhaps a desire to pique her husband, and, of course, the attractiveness of the man. "*Il avoit alors vingt ans ; sa taille étoit parfaitement belle, son air noble, tous les traits de sa visage étoient réguliers : un quantité bien proportionnée de cheveux bruns-chatains, naturellement frisez à grosses boucles, achevoient de le rendre un des plus aimables hommes du monde,*" so runs a contemporary account. "*Son esprit joint à la grandeur de ses sentimens, n'étoit pas moins digne d'admiration que sa personne.*"¹

At such a game Königsmark, who had graduated at other courts as a gallant, could play a hand to perfection ; he was, indeed, the very man for the part, handsome, reckless, *debonair*, vain, delighted to flirt with a princess ; to give him credit, perhaps touched by the lonely lot and fired by the beauty of the lady. It is usual to describe him as an adventurer, but this is correct only in so far as that he led an adventurous life : he was not an adventurer in the modern sense of the word, for not only had he great wealth, but he was also well born, a member of a distinguished Brandenburg family domiciled in Sweden, the son of a Minister-General of Artillery in the Swedish army, and the nephew

¹ *Histoire Secrette de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, pp. 8-19.

of Count Otto William von Königsmark, marshal in the service of Louis XIV, a Huguenot, and a friend of Eleanor D'Olbreuse in the days before her marriage—which fact gives at least an air of plausibility to the suggestion that Count Philip was sent as a boy to Celle.

Königsmark made no secret of his interest in the Princess, and, indeed, a gallant in those days was prone to boast of the favours of his lady, rather than to keep secret his *amour*. Yet it may well be doubted if he paraded his attachment before George Lewis. Certainly the story must be apocryphal which alleges that one day when the Count was vaunting the delights of Dresden, the Prince very pertinently asked why, since it was so agreeable a place, he had left it : “ Because,” he replied, “ I could not bear to see a Prince destroy the life and happiness of his good and beautiful wife by neglecting her for an impudent and worthless mistress.” This remark, the chronicler Pöllnitz mentions, was two-edged : it applied to the Elector of Saxony, but also with equal truth to George Lewis. But Pöllnitz only heard the anecdote at second-hand, and it is almost impossible that Königsmark could have made such a remark and remained at Hanover.

The Count had attracted the interest of Ernest Augustus, who gave him the desirable post of

Colonel of the Hanoverian Guards ; and, according to the author of the *Histoire de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, he soon made the conquest of the all-powerful Countess von Platen, who, meeting him at a ball, made overtures to him. "*La passion qu'il [Königsmark] avoir pour la Princesse ne le rendit pas insensible aux avances d'une aussi belle personne que la Comtesse. Il lui répondit qu'il étoit confus des bontez qu'elle vouloit bien avoir pour lui que le méritoit si peu, et que puisqu'elle lui permettoit de l'aller trouver le soir. . . . Königsmark fut chez la Comtesse, qu'il trouva en déshabille sur un lit de repos. Elle se leva et ayant laissé toute modestie, elle courut l'embrasser, en lui avouant sa foiblesse et lui faisant voir tant de charmes, que Königsmark ne se fit point scrupule de répondre à sa tendresse. Le jour étoit prêt à paroître quand il se retira chez lui. Il se jeta sur son lit pour y prendre quelque repos, mais ce fut en vain, et il reprochait continuellement d'avoir être sensible aux charmes de l'ennemie déclarée de la Princesse.*"¹ ("The passion that Königsmark had for the Princess did not make him insensible to the advances of a woman so handsome as the Countess. He replied to her overtures that he was overcome by her kindness, and would eagerly avail himself of her permission to visit her that evening. . . . Königsmark

¹ *Histoire Secrète de la Duchesse d'Hanover*, p. 80.

repaired to her house, and found her in *déshabille* lying on a couch. She arose, and, having long since abandoned any sense of modesty, embraced him and declared the attraction his person had for her, to which avowal the Count made suitable response. At daybreak he retired, and on his return threw himself on his bed ; but he could not sleep, being overcome by self-reproach arising out of the fact that he had succumbed to the charms of an open enemy of the Princess.”)

If Madame von Platen had made overtures to him, doubtless Königsmark would have been flattered, for the Countess was not the “ hideous old court lady ” that Thackeray pictures, but a handsome Junoesque woman. But the incident is by no means well authenticated, and far more probable is the version of the story given by the Duchess of Orleans in a letter dated Versailles, November 21, 1694 :—“ *Es ist kein aparentz, dass die gräffin Platten sich ahn einen so jungen menschen, alss Königsmark war, solle gemacht haben ; ich glaube vielmehr wie E.L. [die Churfürstin Sophie] sagen, dass sie ehn flatirt hatte in hoffnung, dass er ihre dochter heürahten mögte, denn er war ein gutt parthey.* ” (“ It is not probable that the Countess von Platen would have made up to a man so young as Königsmark ; I think it is more probable, as the Electress Sophia thinks, that she flattered him

in the hope that he might marry her daughter, for he was a good *parti*.”)

Königsmark would doubtless have liked to be at the same time on good terms with Madame von Platen, and the avowed admirer of Sophia Dorothea ; but the change in the Princess's attitude showed him clearly that this was impossible, and, having to make a choice, he gave up the royal mistress. Even this did not placate the Princess, who, uttering bitter reproaches, would not for some time listen to any excuses for his having been friendly with her enemy, and she would scarcely deign to receive him ; and perhaps if the Count had remained in Hanover the breach would have been final, and the tragic history would never have had to be written. Fate, in the person of Ernest Augustus, intervened, all unknowingly, and sent Königsmark away, either on military service or a diplomatic mission ; and absence spoke for him to Sophia Dorothea's heart more effectually than his own most earnest entreaties.

It is not proposed here to trace, step by step, the development of this love affair, and nothing need be said of it until July 1691, when the principals, as yet still only fond and foolish, began to correspond, using obvious cyphers, and referring to the Electoral Prince as “ Le Réformeur,” and to his parents as “ Don Diégo ” and “ La Romaine,” to

the Princess as "Léonisse," "La Cœur Gauche," and "La Petite Louche," and to the Count as "Le Chevalier" and "Tercis"—devices that would scarcely deceive a child, but the conception of which gave these simple folk endless pleasure. Simple they were to a degree that is astounding, when it is remembered that Sophia Dorothea had experience of her father-in-law's Court, where her eyes should have been opened in worldly matters, and that Königsmark had led an adventurous life in more than one country. The Princess at first may have meant nothing more than a pleasurable flirtation; and perhaps the Count began the affair in all innocence—a romantic attachment to a royal lady; but whatever the origin, this love-affair ended as so many others started in pursuit of amusement, or romance—it ended, as the letters show beyond all doubt, in guilty intercourse. Read, as a specimen of the correspondence, the following letters sent her by Königsmark—

[*"Hanover, undated.*]

"For God's sake do not show me any coldness! I fancied that when you left the room you would not deign to look at me. How that seeming affront stung me! I am not the cause of what happened yesterday. You must blame the stars that rule our lives—you must blame them and not

me, for I love and adore you, and think only, day and night, of how to please you. Behold my face, my conduct, my steps, my looks,—do you think I fail in the least trifle? Do you notice any signs of weariness? Alas! far from that, I love you more than ever. My passion upsets my reason, and that is why I cannot conceal what I feel. Adorable one, I will love thee to the tomb! To-night thou shalt be mine—yea, though I perish.”

“ [Hanover], Tuesday evening, 5 o'clock.

“ I do not know if I am to attribute the sadness in your eyes to your pious scruples or to the news of my departure. I flattered myself it was the latter during the game; but at supper the sad look vanished and you were as cheerful as ever. Perhaps your partner's conversation had something to do with it, for he seemed to put you in good temper in a moment. Perhaps I do you wrong: and you restrained yourself so that no one should notice your grief; in that case I forgive you. I wanted to ask you yesterday to let me affect a cheerful look, but I could not do so. I beg you, don't let La Confidente make me signs when she has nothing to give me. I was anxious about her signals all night.

“ I needed your letter to deliver me from profound

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grief. Everything depends on to-morrow's news. I feel like a criminal under sentence of death, who is to be executed on the morrow. Death would not grieve me more than to separate myself from you. I am more than grateful for your consent to see me ; but I know that interview will break my heart, for I have to leave you amid many pleasures, in the midst of Court society, and surrounded by no end of handsome gallants. The Electress will put opportunities in your way and you will not be able to avoid them.

" Until now I have always thought my passion was the cause of our differences, and I have blamed myself for acting in so jealous a manner ; but, Madame, the quarrel we had yesterday evening shows me clearly you cannot live without quarrelling. From the most innocent thing in the world you magnify the greatest fault imaginable. When I am in the wrong and offend you, why are you not reasonable enough to say : ' I will not have you speaking to me in that way, and if it occur again we shall fall out.' I should then take care not to commit the same fault again. But no, you are always picking a quarrel with me. You know such ways distress me, and, added to the wicked affronts I suffer every day from all sides, they crush me so that I do not know what keeps me from taking my leave. I shall certainly do so to-morrow,

for it is evident you wish to make my life unbearable. Le Barbouilleur found a good deal of fault with you for talking so much to that violinist. Of course it was not seemly for a lady of your rank ; but I am no longer in the state of mind to tell you what is seemly and what is not. I must think about beating a retreat, for the way you treat me is beyond bearing ; I would rather lose my sight than be treated so. For mercy's sake, cannot you alter your ways for the sake of a lover who adores you tenderly ? Think of all the trouble you have caused me, of all the risks I run, and if there be the least spark of love left in you, you will not let a heart perish on which your image is for ever graven. . . ."¹

When Sophia Dorothea and Königsmark became lovers, in the fullest significance of the word, cannot definitely be known, but it is a reasonable assumption that this came to pass early in 1692, when Königsmark threatened otherwise to volunteer for service in the Morea. Of course their intercourse was subject to interruption. Sometimes Sophia Dorothea visited her parents at Celle, or the Count accompanied the Elector to Wolfenbüttel, or went away with his regiment, as in June

¹ W. H. Wilkins: *Love of an Uncrowned Queen*, Vol. II, pp. 476-478.

1692, when he joined the Hanoverian forces under George Lewis in Flanders. But, when both were in Hanover, they met frequently, through the connivance of Fräulein von dem Knesebeck ("La Sentinelle," "La Gouvernante," and "La Confidente" of the correspondence), the lady-in-waiting whom Sophia Dorothea had brought with her from Celle, whose duty it was always to be present when the Princess received a visitor.

Even Sophia Dorothea and Königsmark, most reckless of mortals, gradually came to the conclusion that the existing state of affairs could not last, and slowly, perhaps reluctantly, perhaps gleefully, their thoughts turned to flight. It was, indeed, time for that drastic step, but, as all the world knows, it was postponed until too late. The lovers were singularly fortunate that they remained undiscovered so long; and for the final catastrophe they had no one to blame but themselves. They were warned on all sides by those who never suspected anything worse than indiscretion, by Duke George William and by the Duchess Sophia, by Marshall von Podevils, and by Ernest Augustus, the youngest brother of George Lewis. The lovers' letters show that the fear of discovery was uppermost in their mind: yet they made no decisive move, they did not break off their relations, nor did they seek refuge in flight. "I must

have a word with you, for it is wise to take precaution in time, lest we be discovered. You must deny ever having written to me at all, but La Confidente must not deny that I have spoken to you in case they ask what I have written to her," Königsmark wrote to Sophia Dorothea in an undated letter in the autumn of 1693; and he returns to the subject in the next epistle, also undated: "What will you say, Madame, when you learn that they did not let me go through the day without the misfortune I dreaded? Marshall Podevils was the first to tell me to beware of my conduct, because he knew on good authority I was watched. . . Prince Ernest has told me the same thing; and he is not quite so guarded as the other, for he admitted that the conversations I had from time to time with you might draw upon me very unpleasant and serious consequences."

Königsmark served with his regiment in the autumn of 1692, and at the end of the year went on a diplomatic mission. The correspondence ceased in December 1693, however—which suggests that the danger of discovery had at last over-awed the culprits; and in April of that year the Count paid a visit to Frederick Augustus, Elector of Saxony. There was now suspicion at Hanover, which, though not strong enough to be convincing, yet caused ill-feeling between the Electoral

family and Sophia Dorothea, who, returning in June from a visit to her parents at Brockhausen, omitted to pay her respects at Herrenhausen.

So long as there was only suspicion, nothing could be done, but at last, in June, incriminating letters were discovered, probably in Königsmark's house, and placed in the hands of Ernest Augustus. They left no room for doubt, but before any action was taken they were shown to Duke George William and his consort, who could only admit their daughter's guilt. These facts, of course, entirely demolish the theory that there was a conspiracy against the Princess, the parties to which were said to be her parents-in-law, her husband, and, among others, Madame von Platen. Indeed, the only person who had any animus, created by the disappointment of her hope to secure Königsmark as a son-in-law, was the last ; and she could have effected nothing but for the conduct of Sophia Dorothea ; and there is no evidence that Fraülein von dem Knesebeck was guilty of a breach of confidence, though it is known she wished to retire from the Princess's service—fearful, doubtless, of the consequence of discovery of the intrigue.

On July 1, 1694, Königsmark came again to Hanover, and this sealed his fate. On the night of his arrival he left his house, and was never seen

again. There is no doubt that he went to the Leine Palace to see Sophia Dorothea, but what was his object in doing so can only be surmised. By this time he knew with what suspicion he was regarded at Hanover, and it is inconceivable that even so reckless a person as he can have thought it possible to renew the intrigue on that old basis of secret visits : it is a reasonable assumption that he desired to persuade her to fly with him, or that, lover-like, he felt impelled, at any risk, to take a last farewell of his mistress. The latter conjecture has the support of Horace Walpole, who, frequently at fault in his account of this affair, may for once have stumbled on the truth : " The old Elector ordered Königsmark to quit his dominions the next day. The Princess, surrounded by women too closely connected with her husband, and consequently enemies of the lady they injured, was persuaded by them to suffer the Count to kiss her hand before his abrupt departure ; and he was actually introduced by them into her chamber the next morning before she rose." ¹

What fate befell Königsmark was at the time divulged only to a few persons ; but, though even now nothing is known, it seems that as he left the Princess's apartments he was seized by some

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cvi.

soldiers, and immediately killed. It has been said that the letter summoning him to the Palace was not written by Sophia Dorothea, but was a forgery executed by the orders of the Countess von Platen, who seized this promising chance to avenge the slights she had suffered at the hands of the Princess; that the Countess had then told Ernest Augustus that Königsmark was with the Princess, and that the Duke had placed the matter in her hands to be settled once for all. It may be that there was no forged document and that the Countess only learnt of the visit when Königsmark was with the Princess, and it may be that not she but the Elector himself directed the tragic conclusion—for, on this, as on most points of the story, the authorities either differ or are unreliable; but the probability is that the Countess was the moving spirit. "Piloti told me she . . . caused the separation," Lady Cowper noted in her journal;¹ and Vehse calls her "*Die Mörderin Königsmarks*" ("Königsmark's murderess"), and said that in her last years she used to imagine she saw the Count's ghost.² There is no doubt, however—though, as a matter of fact it has never been proved, that Königsmark was

¹ *Diary*, p. 13.

² *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 165.

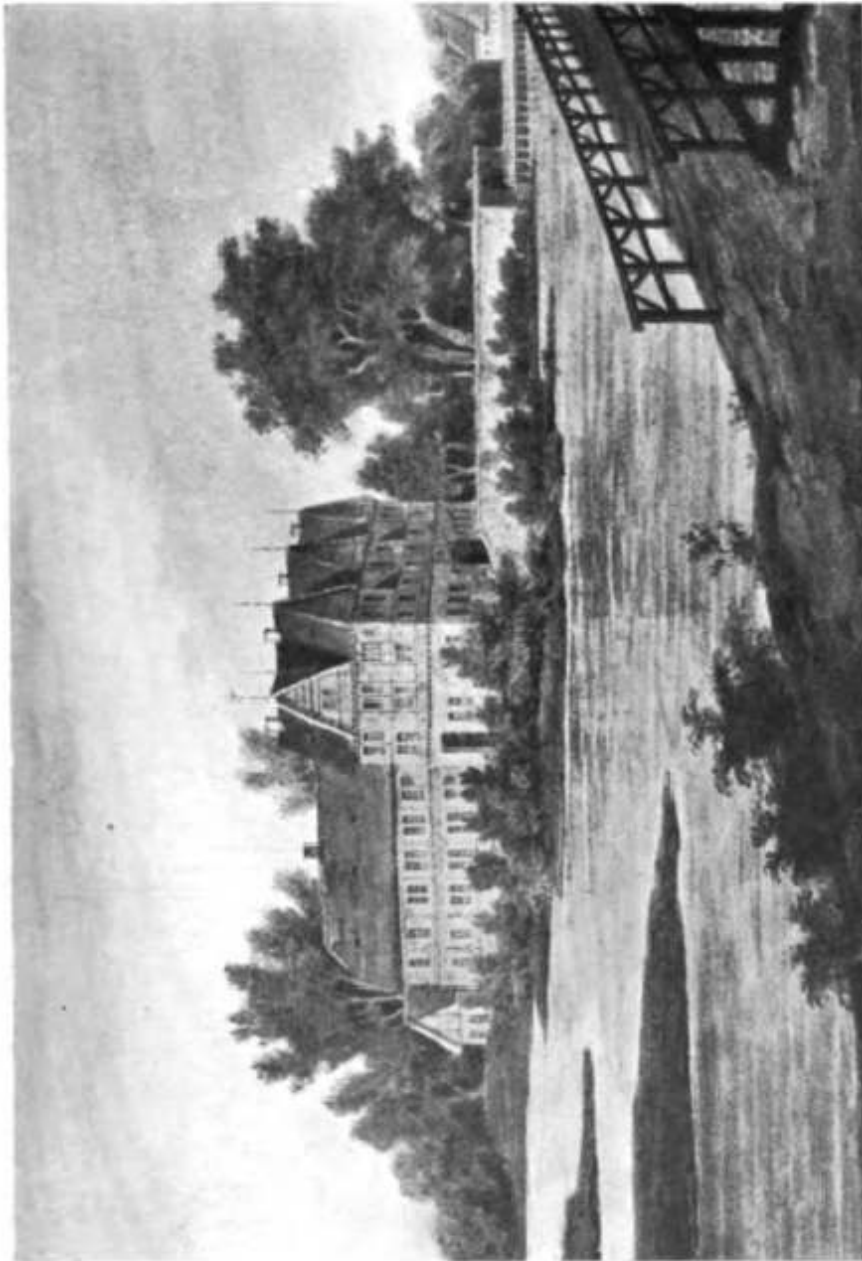
killed. "On the new King's [George II] first journey to Hanover," Horace Walpole wrote in 1788, "some alterations in the Palace being ordered by him, the body of Königsmark was discovered under the floor of the Electoral Princess's dressing-room—the Count having probably been strangled there the instant he left her, and his body secreted."¹

No word was said at Hanover of the murder, and every trace was destroyed, except the incriminating correspondence, which George William requested should be kept as evidence that he was justified in acquiescing in the severe lot meted out to his daughter. The Count's disappearance, however, was not allowed to pass without demands for explanation. His beautiful sister, Aurora, who had visited him at Hanover, having heard that he was alive, left no stone unturned to verify the rumour. Herself being refused entrance to Hanover, she sought the assistance of the Elector of Saxony, who sent an envoy to demand that Königsmark, as an officer in his service, should be given up to him, but only evasive replies could be extorted from Ernest Augustus, and in the end the enquiry was perforce abandoned.

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cvi. Walpole states that George II kept secret the discovery of Königsmark's remains, except from his Queen, who told Sir Robert Walpole, who, years after, informed Horace.

It was not difficult to dispose of the minor actors in this drama, and it was easy to put out of the way Fraülein von dem Knesebeck by imprisoning her, without the semblance of a trial, for four years—when she was allowed to make her escape ; but what to do with a culprit of such exalted rank as the Electoral Princess was a problem not so easily to be solved. A divorce could have been obtained on the grounds of adultery, but this would have reflected on the honour of the House, which, before all things, must be maintained in the public eye. Ernest Augustus decided finally to send his daughter-in-law to Ahlden, and to institute on his son's behalf divorce proceedings, in which there was no mention of Königsmark or the intrigue, only the plea of desertion being urged. Of course the Princess might have entered a defence that would have made the action nugatory, but she had received dispatches from her parents saying that everything was known ; and so, very wisely, foreseeing that opposition might involve her in far greater trouble, she let sentence go by default. The case was tried before a special Ecclesiastical Court, which pronounced sentence of divorce on December 28, 1694, giving the innocent party to the suit permission to marry again.

Thenceforth until her death Sophia Dorothea



From a water-colour drawing in the Familien-Museum at Herrenhausen

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THE DEATH OF SOPHIA DOROTHEA 75

lived at Ahlden, except for a year when the approach of the French army rendered it unsafe, and she was taken to Celle. Though actually a prisoner, her captivity was not permitted to become oppressive. Known as the Duchess—several German writers speak of her as the Princess—of Ahlden, she was given a guard of honour, a sufficient income, and, with certain limits, immunity from control ; but she was guarded from visitors, and, while her mother might visit her, she could never obtain the consent of George Lewis to see her children, who had been placed in the custody of the Electress Sophia. Her charity and piety secured for her the love of the residents in the neighbourhood of Ahlden, and she died much regretted by them in November 1726, thirty-two years after her divorce, and seven months before her husband.¹ At the urgent request of her

¹ " It is known that in Queen Anne's time there was much noise about French prophets. A female of that vocation . . . warned George I to take care of his wife, as he would not survive her a year. That oracle was probably dictated to the French Deborah by the Duchess of Celle, who might be apprehensive lest the Duchess of Kendal should be tempted to remove entirely the obstacle to her conscientious union with their son-in-law. Most Germans are superstitious, even such as have few other impressions of religion. George gave such credit to the denunciation that on the eve of his last departure he took leave of his son and the Princess of Wales with tears, telling them he should never see them more. It was certainly his own approaching fate that melted him, not the thought

family, she was buried at Celle ; but, though the Court of Prussia, to George's great annoyance, went into mourning, at Hanover there was no official recognition of her death, and in England there was only a bald announcement in the *London Gazette* of the demise of " the Duchess-Dowager of Hanover."

George Lewis has been greatly blamed for his conduct to his wife, but those who have read this and the preceding chapters will, it is believed, have arrived at the conclusion that this is unjust. He was culpable in so far that he neglected his wife, but in this respect a royal marriage does not carry the same obligations as the marriage willingly contracted, and, in those days, infidelity on the part of any husband was regarded as a very venial sin against the wife. For the *dénouement* he can in no way be held responsible, for at the time he was not at Hanover ; and when he returned, soon after the death of Königsmark, he was shown the correspondence that proved his wife guilty, after which he could not but acquiesce in the divorce proceedings. Having made up his mind that he must put his wife from him, he was not to be moved

of quitting for ever two persons that he had hated. He did sometimes so much justice to his son as to say "*Il est fougueux mais il a de l'honneur !*"—Horace Walpole : *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and II*, p. cix.

from his decision, either by her appeal on the death of Elector Ernest Augustus, or by the fact that, had he taken her to England, he might, as Dr. Ward suggests, "have diminished the prejudice to which he was exposed in his new kingdom."¹

So secret was the affair kept that in England few were aware there had been a divorce, and Horace Walpole discussing the matter so late as 1788, concluded, "a formal divorce I must doubt." He is confirmed in this, not only by his belief that there was no ground for this measure: "Though German casuistry might allow her husband to take another wife with his left hand, because his legal wife had suffered her right hand to be kissed in bed by a gallant, even Westphalian or Aulic counsellors could not have pronounced that such a momentary adieu constituted adultery"; but also because, "As the genuine wife was always detained in her husband's power, he seems not wholly to have dissolved their union."²

There was further the misleading attitude of George II when Prince of Wales, who openly averred his belief in his mother's innocence—a faith in which, it has been said, he persevered to

¹ *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*, p. 161.

² *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cviii.

the end of his days. As a lad he had made an attempt to see her, being prevented only by the firm refusal of her custodian, Baron von Bülow ; but there is known no other overt act of sympathy. When he arrived at man's estate, and showed his indifference to his father's wishes on every possible occasion, he never went to see her, though his visit could not then have been prevented ; and Lord Hervey says that as King George II never even mentioned his mother's name.¹ On the other hand, Lady Suffolk told Horace Walpole that on the morning after the arrival of the news of the demise of George I, she saw in George II's bedroom and in his consort's dressing-room portraits of Sophia Dorothea that had never hung there before. These, she surmised, must have been concealed by the Prince of Wales, who had not dared to produce them during the life of his father. It was also generally believed that, had Sophia Dorothea outlived her husband, George II would have brought her to England and declared her Queen Dowager. "Lady Suffolk thought he would have made her Regent of Hanover," Horace Walpole has written ; "and she also told me that George I had offered to live again with his wife, but she refused, unless her pardon were asked publicly. She said what most affected

¹ *Memoirs*, Vol. II, p. 542.

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her was the disgrace that would be brought upon her children ; and if she were only pardoned, that would not remove it. Lady Suffolk thought she was then divorced, though the divorce was never published ; and that the old Elector consented to his son's marrying the Duchess of Kendal with the left hand—but it seems strange that George I should offer to live again with his wife, and yet be divorced from her. Perhaps George II, to vindicate his mother, supposed that offer and her spirited refusal.”¹

With her daughter, who, after her marriage with the Prince of Prussia, took into her service Eleanora von dem Knesebeck, Sophia Dorothea corresponded through a term of years ; but Sophia Dorothea the younger never visited her mother, although opportunities were not lacking.

The unhappy wife of George Lewis has received much sympathy from the writers of memoirs, but it must be borne in mind that this feeling is rightly excited, not by the so-called romance of her life, but by the severity of the punishment meted out to her who was, beyond all question, a guilty woman.

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cvi.

CHAPTER VI

GEORGE LEWIS, ELECTOR OF HANOVER

GEORGE LEWIS had gradually become a personage of considerable importance, not only in Hanover and in the Empire, but also in Europe. The military laurels he had won as a lad were greatly enhanced by his achievements in succeeding years. His uncle, George William of Celle, and his father, were now elderly men, far from anxious in their declining years to face the hardships of camp life, and so in 1683 the command in the field of the troops of Brunswick-Lüneburg devolved upon him. In that year he took part in the movements by which the Turks, who had invaded Austria, were driven by Sobieski from the siege of Vienna ; in 1685 he distinguished himself at the capture of Neuhausel in the Hungarian campaign of Duke Charles of Lorraine against the infidels ; in the following year he won much praise for his personal valour at the capture of Buda ; and in July 1693 he was present at the battle of Neerwinden, where he would have lost his life but for an act of conspicuous bravery on the part of General von Hammerstein.

The health of Ernest Augustus began to break up in 1694, and George Lewis was summoned to

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Hanover to take part in the government of the Electorate. The relations of George Lewis with his father were cordial, but with his mother he was not invariably in accord, though the view generally taken that he was always on bad terms with her is a gross exaggeration. This misapprehension has probably been founded upon the oft-quoted letter of the Duchess of Orleans (April 22, 1702): "That the Elector is a dry and disagreeable gentleman I had opportunity enough to discover when he was here; . . . but where he is entirely in the wrong is the manner in which he lives with his mother, to whom he is in duty bound to show nothing but respect. Suspiciousness, haughtiness, and avarice, make this Elector what he is: . . . I observe often enough in *ma Tante's* letters (though she does not speak it out) that she is ill-satisfied. The worst is that this Elector has no good natural disposition, as is evident from his manner of going on with his brothers."

It would be most unfair, however, to judge George Lewis in the light of this or, indeed, any letter of the Duchess of Orleans, for, as a perusal of her correspondence shows, she was greatly prejudiced against her cousin, and could see no good in him. It is said that this feeling of antagonism was created by some slight, real or

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fancied ; but it is possible that it may be traced through the years to her affection for the Pretender. "The Prince of Wales is the nicest child in the world ; he knows French now, and talks willingly. He is neither like his father or mother, but bears a great resemblance to all the portraits of the late King of England [Charles II], his uncle ; and I feel sure that if the English could see this child they could not doubt that he is a member of the royal family," so the Duchess wrote to the Electress Sophia in September 1696 ; and a year later she told the same correspondent : "I love this child [the Prince of Wales] with all my heart. It is impossible to see him and not to love him. He is very good, and will in time I think become a great King, for, although he is only nine years old, I feel sure that he would even now be able to govern better than his father." The Act of Settlement must have come as a blow to the Duchess, and to the end she hated George Lewis.

The differences between mother and son probably arose from her dislike to her husband's determination to introduce the law of primogeniture, which would benefit the first born at the expense of her other sons. However, notwithstanding this cause of disagreement, Sophia and George Lewis were by no means so far estranged as not to correspond ; and there have been

preserved two letters written by the latter when in camp which leave nothing to be desired either in courtesy or respect.

" Du Camp de Wemmel,

" le 1^{er} d'Aoust [1693].

" Je suis bien fâché, Madame, que Vost. Alts. a esté d'en des sy grandes inquietudes pour mais fraires, et croyais y avoir pourveu par la lettre que j'auois écrit à Mons. mon Pere, qu'y a apparrament esté donnée trop tart à la poste. Nous sommes presentement issy dens un fort bau camp, renforsés du coh'r qui auoit esté détasché en Flend're, et il ne paroist plus à l'armée quelle a combattue. Mons. de Luxembourg n'a jusques issy profité d'auqun auentage que d'auoir tiré quelques contributions du pais de Bolduc, comme nous en auons tirés 4 fois autent de Flend're ; la partie est encore assés egale. Lon maine toujours le mesme vie que l'on a fait ; le Roy visite le camp tous les jours, paroist de for bon humeur, et nous auons déga oublié la batallie perdue, den lésperence d'auoir nostre reuenge une autre fois. Je souhaite den pouvoir donner la nouvelle a Vost. Altesse, et quelle soit bien persuadée que je seres toute ma vie son tres humble et tres obeysent fis et serviteur,

" GEORGE LOUIS." ¹

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, pp. 131-2.

" Du Camp de S. Quintin,

" le 11^e d'^{Aoust}~~Septemb.~~ [1693].

" Je suis bien obligé à Vostre Altesse de la peine
 quelle a prise en m'écrivant une si grande lettre, et ne
 manquerai pas, quand l'occasion se présentera, de
 faire les compliments de Madame à Monsr. l'Electeur
 de Baviere. Il faut espérer que presentement que
 les Danois ont bombardé Ratzebourg ils s'en tiendront
 là, et ne continueront pas à nous attaquer par
 derriere d'une maniere si malhonorable et si peu
 juste, pendant que nous avons un si puissant et
 d'engereux ennemi de nous. Si nous soldats
 avons le talent de finger im lock, cela viendront bien
 à propos, et nostre ennemi de par derriere pourroit
 estre resseu comme il le merite. Vostre Altesse a
 raison de dire que il ny a point de bon sens dans le point
 d'honneur ; il ny a rien à répondre, si non que
 selonc une chose établie de tous temps dans le monde ;
 les deux sexes seray bien plus heureux, si il ny avons
 point de mesures à garder, puisque les hommes ne
 se feront pas tuer, et les femmes seray maitresses de
 leur volonté. Je ne voy point de raison pourquoy lon
 a mis le point d'honneur dans des choses si difficiles
 et si contraires à la nature, et trouve que se seroit
 un véritable mojain d'avoir bien des honnables gens,
 de mettre le point d'honneur en sens qui ne l'est
 presentement pas ; cela pourroit aussi produire que

nous ne marscherions pas au secours de Scharleroy, que selon les apparence les frensais ataqueroient. Tout le monde voit que il est assés difficile de le secourir, quoy que la plasse soit en etat de faire quelque resistense ; mais le temps nous fera voir seus qui en arrivera. Mon fraire Cristian a etté fort mallade a Brusselle, mais il est presentement toutafait hors de denger. Je demeure toujours de Vost. Alts.

" Le tres humble fis et serviteur,

" GEORGE LOUIS." ¹

On January 23, 1698, Ernest Augustus died, when the law of primogeniture came into force for the first time in the history of the Brunswick-Celle line, and, in spite of the protests of his brothers, Maximilian William, and Christian, and his sister, Sophia Charlotte, George Lewis became Elector of Hanover. It is proof of his importance, that when his Envoy Extraordinary, Bodo von Oberg, and the Hanoverian Resident at the Imperial Court, Daniel Erasmus Guldenberg, were received in audience by the Emperor Leopold to announce their master's accession, the latter accorded to them all the honours due to the representatives of a sovereign power.

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, pp. 132-3.

The new Elector assisted in the military operations against Denmark that resulted in the Peace of Travendahl; and in the same year he greatly increased his influence by entering into a perpetual alliance with Brandenburg. In 1701 he and his uncle, George William, served in the war of the Spanish Succession on the side of the Grand Alliance formed by William III (of England); and in 1702 he performed the useful service of inducing the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, either by persuasion or threats, to terminate his friendly relations with France and throw in his lot with the Empire. George Lewis was now, owing to the Act of Succession passed by the British Parliament, more prominent than ever, as an heir in the direct line to the English throne; and on the death of William of Orange there was some talk of his being elected Stadtholder. This scheme came to nothing; nor was George Lewis appointed Captain-General of the British forces abroad, as Leibnitz thought would have been only right and fitting. "And now I shall wish that concerns were so well concerted in the Empire that Mgr. the Elector, our master, could set out for the Middle Rhine and the Moselle at the head of thirty or forty thousand men, of which the troops of his own House might make up nearly the half," Leibnitz wrote on April 30, 1702, to von Oberg, who remained at Vienna

as Hanoverian Envoy Extraordinary. "This is only in case they do not give him the command of the English forces, which naturally should belong to him ; but I question the Queen's being much disposed to do this. She has no subject to be jealous of us ; nevertheless this is natural to men, not to speak of her husband, who is a Prince of Denmark."¹

On the death in 1705 of George William, Duke of Brunswick-Celle, his dominions passed to George Lewis, but this caused little or no alteration in the relation between the two states which for some time past had been united in policy. "All in office under the Duke have already sworn conditional allegiance to the Elector, nor is there anything of moment transacted there without his privity and consent," Toland wrote in 1702. "He and the Duke have the same public ministers in foreign courts, which shows them to be in the same secret or interest."² The troops of the electorate and the duchy had for years past fought side by side, usually under the command of George Lewis ; and, to sum up, all matters had been so well adjusted that the succession was safeguarded in every direction. George Lewis did not remove the seat of government to the Palace

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 269.

² *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 50.

at Celle, but remained at his favourite city of Hanover, which was not only larger than the capital of the duchy, but was also in many ways a more agreeable place of residence. At Celle was installed a Regency, which judged all causes, without any appeal but to the Council of State at Hanover.¹

The year after the accession of George Lewis to the dukedom of Celle, his position was strengthened by the marriage of his daughter with Frederick William of Prussia ; and in August of the following year he was offered the post of commander-in-chief of the Imperial Army on the Upper Rhine. He accepted, but only after some hesitation, for the general he superseded was the Margrave Ernest of Brandenburg-Baireuth, an incompetent commander, who left his troops in an unsatisfactory condition of discipline. George Lewis worked hard to get his command into order, and in this he succeeded ; but in his operations he was much hampered by the fact that Marlborough and Prince Eugene would not confide to him their plans. Partly for this reason, and partly because he was not adequately supported by the Emperor, he resigned his command in 1709, though he did not withdraw his own levies.

Emperor Leopold I had invested George Lewis

¹ Pöllnitz: *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 61.

by proxy with the Electoral dignity on January 9, 1699, but still the College of Electors at the Imperial Diet refused to admit the head of the House of Hanover to its deliberations. Indeed, it was not until 1708, when it had become obviously impolitic and even dangerous to hold out longer, that the College promised to take the matter into consideration. In February of that year, however, a resolution was passed, "That, in consideration of the special reasons alleged in these decrees [of the Emperor], and other important motives, the College consented, on the part of the whole princes of the Empire, without any reserve, to the new Electoral dignity conferred by his late Imperial Majesty, Leopold ; and to the establishment of a ninth Electorate, in the most ancient, powerful, and of the holy Roman Empire, so well-deserving House of Brunswick, Lüneburg, and Hanover ; that is to say, in the first line of that House in the order of primogeniture."¹

On June 30, 1708, George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, for the first time took his seat and voted in the Electoral College ; and two years later the hereditary Arch-Treasurership of the Empire was conferred upon him.

As Elector of Hanover George Lewis showed that he had in a high degree the capacity to govern,

¹ Halliday : *House of Guelph*, p. 159.

and the position he attained in the Empire shows that he was thoroughly conversant with the management of the foreign affairs of his country. Nor was he any less successful in the direction of the internal concerns of the Electorate. "The Elector, George Lewis, is not to be exceeded in his zeal against the long-intended Universal Monarchy of France, and so is most hearty for the common cause of Europe, wherein his own is so nearly concerned ; he understands our constitution the best of any foreigner ; and though he be well versed in the art of war, and of invincible courage, having often exposed his person to the greatest dangers, in Hungary, in the Morea, on the Rhine, and in Flanders, yet he is naturally of peaceable inclinations, which mixture of qualities is agreed by the experience of all ages to make the best and most glorious Princes." So Toland wrote after his visit to Hanover in 1702 ; and of the Elector as manager of his home affairs he added : " He's a perfect man of business, exactly regular in the economy of his revenues, reads all despatches himself at first hand, writes most of his own letters, and spends a very considerable part of his time about such occupations in his closet, and with his ministers. I hope, therefore, that none of our countrymen will be so injudicious as to think his reservedness the effect of sullenness or pride, nor mistake that

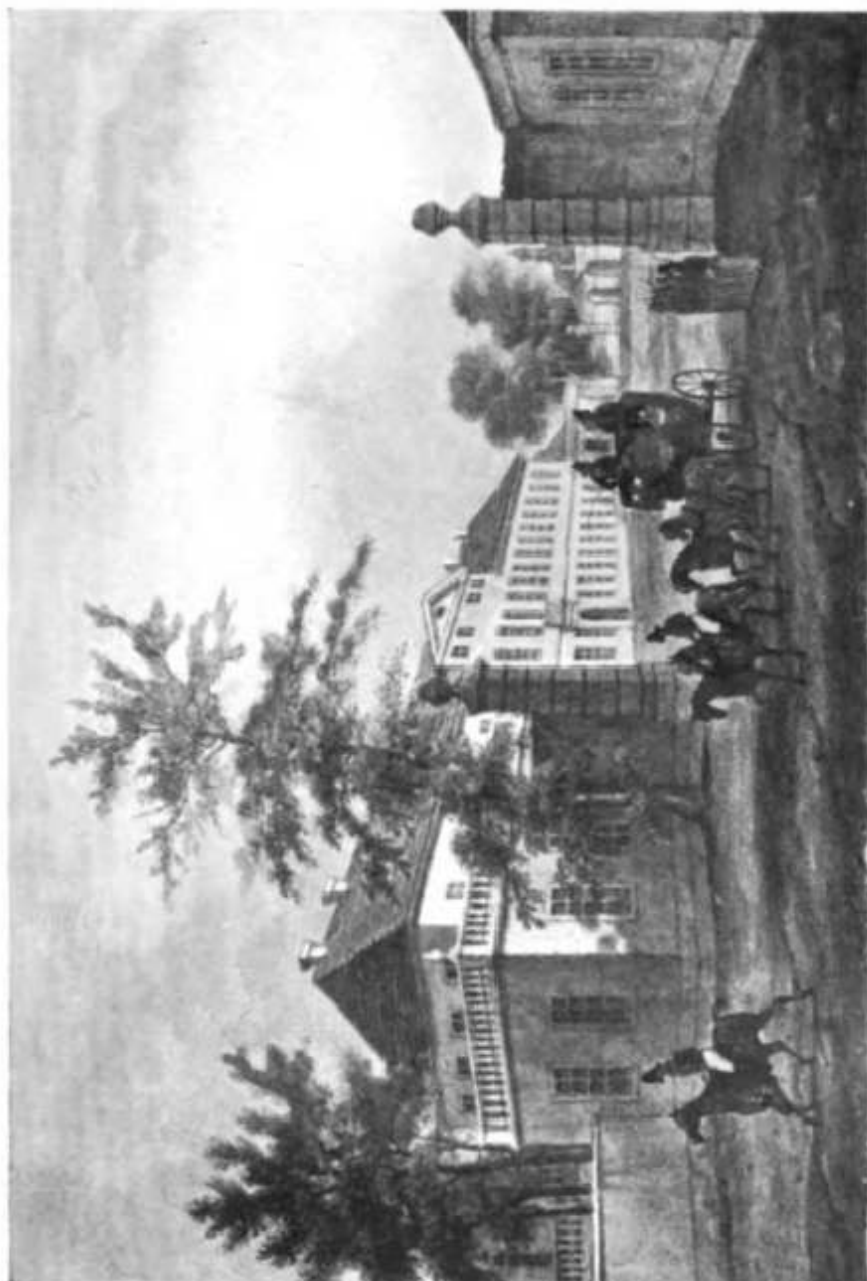
for state which really proceeds from modesty, caution, and deliberation, for he is very affable to such as accost him, and expects that others should speak to him first, which is the best information I could have from all about him, and I partly know to be true by experience. And as to what I said of his frugality in laying out the public money, I need not give a more particular proof than that all the expenses of his court (as to eating, drinking, fire, candles, and the like) are duly paid every Saturday night ; the officers of his army receive their pay every month, as likewise his envoys in every part of Europe ; and all the officers of his household, with the rest that are on the Civil List, are cleared off every half-year. His administration is most equitable, mild, and prudent. He is most beloved of his subjects of any prince in the world. There is no division or faction among them, by reason of his impartial favour ; and instead of railing or grumbling against his person, they would never make an end (if you would have patience to listen) of telling stories denoting his justice and moderation, particularly in disputes about the titles of land, or any other cause depending between him and his subjects.”¹

In Toland's account of the Court of Hanover

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, pp. 70-1.

there are, what Dr. Ward has happily called, "certain palpable flatteries for the English market." Thus, the statement that George Lewis "understands our constitution the best of any foreigner" is true only in so far that at that time scarcely anyone on the Continent was at all acquainted with it; and the prophecy that "George Lewis understands English, and in a little time will speak it readily"¹ was clearly disproved in due course: the Elector to the end of his days understood but little English, and could not speak it at all. Still, with the exception of these errors dictated probably by an uncontrolled enthusiasm, Toland's picture of the Elector may be accepted as accurate, for his statements are generally corroborated by contemporary writers, and have long been quoted as authoritative by German historians. Certainly, George Lewis handled the affairs of his electorate with prudence and dexterity, and was vastly popular with his subjects of all ranks.

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 71.



From a water-colour drawing in the Familien-Museum at Herrenhausen

THE CASTLE AT HERRENHAUSEN

CHAPTER VII

HERRENHAUSEN

IN the eyes of the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, Hanover is merely a town that has had the distinction of being the residence of a minor German potentate, who, owing to his father's choice of a wife and a series of accidents, succeeded in his fifty-fifth year to the British throne ; and it comes as a blow to our self-complacency to find that the Hanoverians regard this merely as an incident in the history of their reigning House. Nor is it by them regarded as an agreeable incident ! It is true they are pleased to have given a succession of kings to this country, but they do not disguise the feeling that they consider they paid too heavily for the privilege by having absentee rulers for more than a century ; and there can be no doubt that when on the death of William IV his brother Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, became resident King of Hanover, and that state thereby severed its connection with Great Britain, there was general rejoicing. This may argue a want of gratitude, for Hanover, by its association with this country, gained greatly, not only in influence but also in territory ; but, as a matter of

fact, the inhabitants of North Germany did not suffer foreigners gladly then, any more than to-day, when a stranger is looked upon with suspicion.

This is not the only disappointment that the British visitor has to sustain. He has probably remembered that Thackeray, lecturing on the Georges, remarked that Hanover was then very much as it was in the days of George Lewis, and, forgetful of the passage of time, he has anticipated the pleasure of finding a quaint, old-fashioned town. Alas ! it has been " improved " out of all recognition : it has a quarter of a million inhabitants, and all the convenience of the most up-to-date German cities. Modern Hanover, indeed, is doubtless to the residents most delightful, but it is planned on a scale so elaborate that the visitor is justified in regarding it as a toy town on a vast scale ; and even its most stalwart defenders cannot deny that its pretentiousness may justify a smile. From north to south, from east to west, it is invaded, aye, and conquered, by the spirit of bureaucracy, and this is everywhere evident in the buildings. The Government offices and official residences of this town with its quarter of a million inhabitants are almost as large as the London structures that house the departments of the Secretaries of State whose sway extends over the British Empire ; the new Town Hall, with the

adjacent Water Board, covers an area nearly equal to that of the projected London County Council Hall ; and there are two museums, each about the size of the National Gallery, though—the truth must out—the really *valuable* contents might be placed in two or three small rooms. There is (in addition to other places of amusement) a Court Theatre larger than Covent Garden, several immense hotels, more than two score restaurants and *cafés* about the size of Prince's ; the station has a frontage broader than Euston, and the General Post Office is an imposing pile ; while the banks, merely local offices of concerns in larger cities, are built apparently to the scale of the West-end branch of the Bank of England. Hanover, indeed, is so magnificent, so Hausmannised—there is a street named after the great man—that it produces a feeling of monotony ; it is so fine, so regular, so large, that one might wander for hours without finding anything suggestive of the historical interest with which it is associated.

Still, though for the most part hidden by vast blocks of modern masonry, may yet be seen glimpses of the Hanover of bygone generations, beautiful, varied, un-Grimthorped, a pleasure to look upon, from which it is possible to conjure up a picture of the town of other days when, in the seventeenth century, it was a fortified city, and

divided into the New and Old Towns. Such a division, according to Toland, "is always a sure sign of a thriving place ;" ¹ but, on the other hand, Pöllnitz remarks of Hanover that the ramparts scarcely deserved the name, and that the town was ill-built, ² while so late as 1716, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu declared that the town is neither large nor handsome." ³ This again is contradicted by Sir William Dutton Colt, the English resident at the Courts of Hanover, Celle and Brunswick, who in a despatch from Hanover, dated July 26, 1689, wrote : " This place has much more the appearance of a Court, and the town much larger and finer (than Celle), people laying out their money in building and furnishing their houses, besides abundance of strangers resorting constantly hither."

Under John Frederick (a "*heiterer, curioser, und kunstliebender Herr*") ⁴ Hanover had become a centre of some social importance. During his numerous visits to Vienna and Italy he had acquired a taste for art and letters, and at Versailles, where he was a favourite of the *Grand Monarque*, he had become imbued with a passion

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 52.

² *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 63.

³ *Letters* (ed. Thomas), Vol. I, p. 135.

⁴ Vehse : *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, p. 34.

for the bright side of life. He showed his interest in letters by founding a library which, under the fostering care of Leibnitz, then at the age of twenty-six, renowned for learning, acquired wide renown ; his devotion to the Church, to which he had been converted, made him welcome Roman Catholic clergy, who flocked from all quarters to his Court ; and his fondness for gaiety was evinced by the importation of French actors, actresses, dancers, and Italian singers.¹ It was a motley throng that crowded his Court, while he, the ruler, slowly drank himself to death.

In the first year of his reign as Duke of Hanover (1665) John Frederick, who desired to imitate Louis XIV's vast pleasure-house, had plans made for a summer residence and gardens at Herrenhausen (the Horringhusen, Horringhausen, or Hörninghausen, of earlier days), and, as soon as the designs were approved, work was begun. When Ernest Augustus succeeded his brother as Duke of Hanover, he carried the scheme further. He employed the Venetian architect, the Marquis Quirini, to replace John Frederick's wooden structure by a building of more durable material,

¹ John Frederick subscribed with his brothers, the Duke of Celle and the Bishop of Osnabrück, to support a French company of actors consisting of twenty-four persons, which performed four months at each of the courts.

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and this work was completed in 1698. The Palace of Herrenhausen, of no great beauty, is a broad-fronted structure of two stories and a red-tiled mansard roof ; and the main building runs around three sides of a courtyard, facing the Great Garden with terraces to right and left over the ground floor, and, in the centre, outside, a stone double staircase descending from the first floor in a fine sweep. The ground floor was given over to the officials, and the royal apartments were on the first floor : in the time of George Lewis the apartments next to his suite were occupied by Mademoiselle von der Schulenburg.¹ If the Palace, considered as a royal residence, is not imposing, and its grounds are not so considerable as those surrounding the mansions of many English gentlemen, as a whole it conveys exactly the note that inspired it. It was built as a summer residence, a palace of pleasure, for the royal family, and for such a purpose it is eminently suitable ; and certainly it is much less pretentious than most of the buildings of modern Hanover, and in far better taste.

Away from the Palace were the stables, with accommodation for the six hundred carriage and riding horses, of which the sovereign reserved for

¹ Malortie : *Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*, Vol. II, p. 131.

his own use twenty teams of coach horses, each team consisting of eight horses ; and, besides, several other houses (two of which are now utilised as the family museum and the family portrait gallery) for the royal princes and members of the Court. The Orangery, with frescoes depicting scenes from the Trojan war, painted by the Italian artist, Tomaso, which was planned in 1692, and was the favourite retreat of the Electress Sophia, in her declining years, provided oranges, apples, and pineapples at Christmas for the royal table, and, in a day when glass-houses were scarcely known, attracted much attention.

“ I was particularly surprised at the vast number of orange trees, much larger than I have ever seen in England, though this climate is certainly colder. But I had more reason to wonder that night at the King’s table,” Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote from Hanover in 1716. “ There was brought to him from a gentleman of this country two large basketsful of ripe oranges and lemons of different sorts, many of which were quite new to us ; and, what I thought worth all the rest, two ripe ananas, which to my taste are a fruit perfectly delicious. You know that they are naturally the growth of Brazil, and I could not imagine how they could come there but by enchantment. Upon enquiry, I learnt that they have brought their stoves to such

perfection they lengthen the summer as long as they please, giving to every plant the degree of heat it would receive from the sun in its native soil. The effect is very near the same ; I am surprised we do not practise in England so useful an invention.”¹

If the Palace does not deserve any very high commendation, the gardens, laid out by Lenôtre, the gardener of Louis XIV, in the Dutch-French style, of which, after Versailles and Schönbrunn they are said to be the best example, are well worthy of notice. The Great Garden presents a marked contrast to the adjacent (and subsequently added) George Garden, where Nature is allowed, or, by subtle art, appears to be allowed, free sway. There is, of course, nothing natural about the formal French garden, with its three broad avenues of lime-trees, along the sides of which are thick but closely-cropped hornbeam hedges, eight feet high, branching off at regular intervals at right angles. At the south-west and south-east corners, at the end of the avenues are two pavilions in the form of Roman Temples, both originally built of wood, though that in the south-west corner, being destroyed by lightning, was in the eighteenth century rebuilt in stone. Everywhere are mythological figures in stone, carp-ponds,

¹ Lady M. W. Montagu : *Letters* (ed. Thomas), Vol. I, p. 139.

waterfalls, and fountains ; and facing the palace, the view from which is open to the horizon, is a broad stretch of turf, with flower-beds on either side.

Ernest Augustus conceived the idea of enclosing the grounds with a moat, eighty-six feet wide, and George Lewis, when he came into the Electorate, improved upon his father's plan by introducing gondolas upon the water. George Lewis, indeed, interested himself in beautifying Herrenhausen, and from his accession until 1706 made many alterations and additions. He purchased in Paris for twenty thousand livres twenty-three antique busts of the Roman Emperors, and placed them in the Orangery ; and he erected an open-air theatre, with a semi-circular stone arena for the spectators : the ground that serves as a stage has been raised, two Bacchantes mark the proscenium, and the wings are formed of hedges at right angles, each flanked by a statue. There performed the troupes of actors, singers, and dancers, generally of French nationality, that in the sixteenth and seventeenth century were appanages of most continental courts. In 1716 George Lewis sent from England William Benson to carry out Leibnitz's plans for the famous waterworks that threw the water much higher than the celebrated fountain at St. Cloud, which until then was the

most remarkable of the kind ; and eight years later, at a cost of nearly three thousand thalers, he laid out the famous Herrenhäuser Allee that runs from the Palace to the town of Hanover, over a mile in length, consisting of three avenues of lime trees, one of sixty, the others of twenty feet wide, devoted respectively to driving, riding, and walking.¹

¹ " Herrenhausen is a country-house about an English mile and a half from Hanover. The garden is delicate indeed, the waterworks great and noble, the basins and fountains extremely large, the Wilderness curiously contrived, and decked with a perpetual verdure ; the walks are made firm enough with a sort of gravel they get out of the river ; the Orangery is counted one of the largest in all Europe ; there are beautiful cascades, and there is a perfect theatre excellently cut out into green seats, the dressing-rooms for the actors being so many bowers and summer-houses on each side, the whole set off with many fine statues, most of them gilt, and an excellent waterwork just behind."—Toland's contemporary description (*An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 77).



From a water-colour drawing in the Familien-Museum at Herrenhausen

THE PALACE ON THE LEINE, HANOVER

CHAPTER VIII

HANOVERIAN WAYS AND MEANS

HERRENHAUSEN was an expensive toy, even for a family so wealthy—so wealthy, that is, as measured by the continental standards of wealth—as that of the Electors of Hanover. Toland gives the income of the Elector in 1702 as three hundred thousand thalers; ¹ and Pöllnitz states that the revenue from the Electorate at the end of the reign of George Lewis was six million crowns.² This, however, was probably an exaggeration, although Hanover had vastly increased in material prosperity and at this time includes the Duchess of Celle and Lüneburg. The revenues of the state, however, did not account for the incomes of the rulers which were derived in part from other sources. John Frederick had a yearly subsidy of 240,000 thalers from Louis XIV, and Ernest Augustus received a handsome income from his eldest brother, George William, for marrying in

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 51.

² *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 68.

In 1688 there were in Hanover 1,853 houses.—William Ker: *Remarks on the Government of Several Parts of Germany*.

his stead the Electress Sophia ; and of course the head of the House of Hanover obtained considerable sums of money by the sale of regiments composed of their subjects to any power engaged in war—a proceeding common to most German sovereigns, and one which provided an appreciable portion of their income. “ We may judge likewise [of the wealth of George Lewis] by the quota of troops he furnishes to the Empire, those he lets out to the Allies, and those he keeps on foot at home . . . and that his Highness draws a mighty profit from his silver mines in the Harz. . . . And lastly, 'tis no small benefit to that family that the Bishopric of Osnabrück, falling by turn to Protestants and Papists, the bishops of the latter persuasion may be chosen without restriction among all the qualified persons of his communion, whereas in the Protestant line it must be always one of the House of Hanover.”¹ So wrote Toland ; and this may be supplemented by the statement that George Lewis in 1702, in return for subsidies, provided ten thousand foot soldiers for the British Army, and furnished the States-General with a cavalry brigade.

Pöllnitz states that the happy financial condition of the Hanoverian rulers was due, not only to the increasing prosperity of the people, but also

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 51.

to the excellent management of John Frederick, Ernest Augustus, and George Lewis ; and he goes on to say that, though these Princes lived with the splendour suitable to their grandeur, their subjects were never oppressed.¹ It is true that Ernest Augustus lived within his means, but this may only be said if the expression holds good in the case of a sovereign who is careful to exact from his people more money than he spends ! It would be interesting to have the opinion in this matter of those subjects of the duke who were impressed in the legions sold by him to foreign states ! This cannot be hoped for, but there is a letter from Leibnitz to Count Ernest von Hesse-Rheinsfels, dated November 28, 1686, that once for all banishes the idea that the people were not oppressed by taxation—

“ New taxes are now introduced into Hanover, the object of which is not to burden commerce ; that is to say, the merchants and tradesmen as such shall not pay the duties, but the purchasers.

¹ Pöllnitz : *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 68.

“ Ernest Augustus obtained the Electoral dignity, not without making great presents to the Court of Vienna, at a time too when his power was limited to the Duchy of Hanover and the Bishopric of Osnabrück. Though this Prince had a numerous family to provide for, he lived with splendour, was fond of magnificence and pleasures, gallant, generous, and liberal, and when he died, he left no debts to pay, and his finances were in a good state.”—*Ibid.*

The miller may not let his meal go from him, nor the tailor clothes, nor the bootmaker boots, until he has received a certificate that the duty has been duly paid. There is also an impost on cattle. . . . These are the principal articles to which the new tax applies, and it amounts to ten or twelve per cent. of the worth. I think it was advisable to put a double duty on French wines, since this may reduce the present considerable quantity that is imported. Even the peasants are gradually becoming consumers of this French wine ; for, loving those potations that go to the head, they find they attain their objective more economically by drinking a small amount of wine than a vast quantity of beer. This takes money out of the country and hurts the breweries." ¹

Leibnitz was clear-sighted enough to see the drawbacks of this impost. He realised that "it will lead to much smuggling, which it will be difficult to prevent, and, indeed, could only be prevented by establishing an army of excise officers ; and, even more serious, that it will drive the poorer classes, who live from hand to mouth and have no land, over the frontier to settle in other countries not so heavily taxed." ²

¹ Malortie : *Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*, Vol. VII, pp. 103-4.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 145.

There are other methods of oppression than that of taxation. Compulsory enlistment, not for the sake of the country, but to swell the sovereign's purse, and that at a very low rate of wages. That this, too, was practised is proved by the curious document that has been preserved of the wages paid to the officials and servants employed at Herrenhausen. German reigning princes have a passion for order, and under their rule Herrenhausen was run with all the care and economy that to-day is a feature of the best-managed trading concerns. Nothing was too trivial to be considered, and rules were framed for every class of servant and for every conceivable emergency. These directions have been printed,¹ and there have fortunately been found papers giving very interesting and instructive details (now for the first time presented in English) of the expenses of the Hanoverian Court.

By way of contrast, as showing the Court in the careful days of George Augustus's father, may first be given—

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DRESS ALLOWANCE MADE BY
GEORGE, DUKE OF CELLE, IN 1639.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Mistress of the Robes, Elizabeth von Schenk, <i>relict</i> | Th. Gros. |
| von Angern | 24. - |

¹ See Malortie : *Der Hannoversche Hof*.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DRESS ALLOWANCE MADE BY
GEORGE, DUKE OF CELLE, IN 1639—(*continued*).

| | Th. | Gros. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|
| Esquire von Bodenteich | 24. | — |
| Page Harthausen | 20. | — |
| Wurmb (asked for 30) received | 20. | — |
| Court Tailor | 10. | — |
| The Duchesses' Dressmaker, Tailor, Groom, each .. | 10. | — |
| Three Stable-boys, each | 10. | — |
| Stud-groom, the Coachman of the Duke and Duchess, the Coachmen of the black team, of the black and brown team, of the silver coach, and of the <i>calèche</i> , the five Out-Riders, the five Footmen, each .. | 8. | — |
| Hans, the Court Jester.. .. . | 18. | 14 |
| Court-Fisherman | 10. | — |
| Three Messengers | 55. | — |
| Eight Trumpeters | 161. | — |
| Four Bandsmen.. .. . | 52. | — |

Liveries were made for 13 Pages of Honour, 7 lackeys, 3 tailors, 8 Gentlemen-at-Arms, 2 cooks, 3 (wine) cellarers, 1 gardener, 1 butler, 2 stokers, 1 (beer) cellarer, and 8 huntsmen.

The Court Servants wear blue coats, grey lace; some gold, others silk buttons; yellow stockings, cloth, per ell, 1 Thlr. 13 Gr. 4P f.

Huntsmen have grey cloth at 1 Th., 9 Gr., lined with red, green cords, grey hat, silver buttons.¹

The above is a quaint document, and everywhere suggests cheese-paring, even though the thaler (three marks) had then a greater purchasing power than now; but it is typical of the spirit of economy that in all departments pervaded the German Courts.

¹ Malortie: *Der Hannoversche Hof*, pp. 23-24.

THE COURT OF HANOVER IN 1696 109

Even more interesting is the record of
THE COURT OF HANOVER IN THE YEAR 1696.

| No. of Persons. | Description. | Salary in Thalers. |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| I. LADIES OF THE COURT AND FEMALE SERVANTS | | |
| 1 | Mistress of the Household | 300 |
| 6 | Maids of Honour, each 150 Thalers .. | 900 |
| 3 | Tirewomen ; one 50, two 35 Thalers .. | 120 |
| 1 | Housekeeper | 52 |
| 3 | Chambermaids ; two 50, one 24 Thalers .. | 124 |
| 2 | Washerwomen, each 16 Thalers .. | 32 |
| 4 | Maids in attendance upon the Mistress of the Household and the Maids of Honour, each 16 Thalers | 64 |
| 1 | Maid to clean plate | 12 |
| 8 | Housemaids, each 10 Thalers | 80 |
| II. GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSEHOLD | | |
| 1 | Master of the Horse.. .. . | 1092 |
| 1 | Master of the Household of the Electress Sophia | 1060 |
| 1 | Master of the Hounds | 1860 |
| 1 | Lord Chamberlain | 2004 |
| 1 | Chief Cup-Bearer | 1060 |
| 2 | Chamberlains, each 600 Thalers | 1200 |
| 1 | Marshal | 500 |
| 1 | Chamberlain to the Electress Sophia .. | 300 |
| 5 | Gentlemen-in-Waiting, each 400 Thalers .. | 2000 |
| 5 | Esquires, one at 300, four at 200 Thalers .. | 1100 |
| 1 | Hunting Attendant.. .. . | 200 |
| 1 | " Cavalier " | 600 |
| III. PAGES | | |
| 1 | Governor | 200 |
| 1 | Tutor | 50 |
| 52 | Carry forward | 14910 |

| No. of Persons. | Description. | Salary in Thalers. |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 52 | Brought forward .. | 14910 |
| | III. PAGES—(<i>continued</i>) | |
| 1 | Fencing-Master | 114 |
| 1 | Dancing-Master | 400 |
| 11 | Pages, each 40 Thalers | 440 |
| 1 | Turk | 24 |
| 1 | Attendant | 10 |
| | IV. OFFICIALS, ETC., AND BAND | |
| 3 | Doctors ; two, 828, one 500 Thalers .. | 2156 |
| 1 | Barber | 600 |
| 1 | Exchequer Clerk | 300 |
| 1 | Clerk of the Works | 232 |
| 1 | Painter | 100 |
| 1 | Italian Painter | 100 |
| 1 | Organist | 200 |
| 1 | Musical Conductor | 700 |
| 2 | Musicians, each 300 Thalers | 600 |
| 4 | French Musicians, each 116 Thalers .. | 464 |
| 13 | Trumpeters and one Kettle-Drummer, each 229 Thalers | 2977 |
| | V. OFFICERS AND LIVERIED SERVANTS | |
| 1 | Groom of the Chambers | 293 |
| 10 | Footmen, at various wages.. .. . | 1500 |
| 2 | Upholsterers, each 110 Thalers | 220 |
| 25 | Servants ; twenty-four at 30, one at 14 Thalers | 734 |
| | VI. KITCHENS | |
| 1 | <i>Maitre d'Hôtel</i> | 500 |
| 1 | Clerk to the above | 287 |
| 1 | Travelling Clerk | 150 |
| 2 | Clerks in the Kitchens, each 50 Thalers .. | 100 |
| 139 | Carry Forward | 28111 |

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| No. of Persons. | Description. | Salary in Thalers. |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 139 | Brought Forward .. | 28111 |
| | VI. KITCHENS—(continued) | |
| 1 | Steward | 30 |
| 1 | Clerk | 30 |
| 1 | <i>Chef-de-cuisine</i> | 172 |
| 1 | French <i>Chef-de-cuisine</i> | 312 |
| 1 | French Cook.. .. . | 300 |
| 2 | Roasting Cooks ; one at 100, the other at 50 Thalers.. .. . | 150 |
| 10 | Cooks, at various wages | 738 |
| 1 | Pastrycook | 60 |
| 6 | Scullions, each 12 Thalers | 72 |
| 1 | Stoker | 17 |
| 3 | Women Cooks, together | 33 |
| | VII. CONFECTIONERY KITCHEN | |
| 2 | Pastrycooks, one at 112, one at 88 Thalers | 200 |
| 1 | Assistant Pastrycook | 50 |
| 1 | Scullion | 12 |
| | VIII. CELLARS | |
| 3 | Cellarers, together | 222 |
| 2 | Assistant-Cellarers, together | 40 |
| 1 | French Custodian of Wines | 100 |
| 1 | Beer-Butler | 41 |
| | IX. PLATE ROOM | |
| 1 | Custodian | 104 |
| 1 | Travelling Custodian | 50 |
| 1 | Assistant-Custodian | 26 |
| 1 | Table-Attendant | 50 |
| 1 | Table-Decorator | 40 |
| 183 | Carry Forward .. | 30960 |

| No. of Persons. | Description. | Salary in Thalers. |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 183 | Brought Forward .. | 30960 |
| X. BAKERY | | |
| 1 | Chief Baker | 50 |
| 1 | Travelling Baker | 40 |
| 1 | Assistant-Baker | 20 |
| 1 | Dutch Bread-maker | 30 |
| XI. STABLES | | |
| 1 | Riding Master | 383 |
| 3 | Horse-Breakers ; two 200, one 100 Thalers | 500 |
| 1 | Saddler | 158 |
| 1 | Wheelwright | 50 |
| 1 | Forage-Master | 40 |
| 1 | Veterinary Surgeon.. .. . | 45 |
| 1 | Buyer of Hay | 60 |
| 16 | Coachmen, each 26 Thalers | 416 |
| 14 | Outriders, each 19 Thalers.. .. . | 266 |
| 19 | Stableboys, each 22 Thalers | 418 |
| 4 | Helpers, at 9 Thalers | 36 |
| 13 | Helpers, at 13 Thalers | 169 |
| 3 | Smiths, one 29, one 26, one 20 Thalers .. | 75 |
| XII. THE HUNT | | |
| 1 | Clerk (Woods and Forests).. .. . | 227 |
| 1 | Huntsman | 119 |
| 1 | Keeper of Hounds | 92 |
| 8 | Assistant-Huntsmen, each 17½ Thalers .. | 140 |
| 1 | Tailor | 61 |
| 2 | Keepers, each 56 Thalers | 112 |
| 1 | Gatherer of Ortolans | 172 |
| 2 | Huntsmen, each 152½ Thalers | 305 |
| 2 | Huntsmen, each 60 Thalers | 120 |
| 1 | Bird-Catcher | 63 |
| 1 | Inspector of Fences.. .. . | 103 |
| 286 | Carry Forward .. | 35230 |

THE COURT OF HANOVER IN 1696 113

| No. of Persons. | Description. | Salary in Thalers. |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 286 | Brought Forward .. | 35230 |
| XIII. THE GARDENS | | |
| 1 | Chief Gardener | 500 |
| 1 | Hydrostatic Engineer | 500 |
| 1 | Gardener | 286 |
| 4 | Assistant Gardeners, one at 100, three at 80 Thalers.. .. . | 340 |
| XIV. VARIOUS SERVANTS | | |
| 2 | Chimney Sweeps, one at 20, one at 18 Thlrs. | 38 |
| 1 | Rabbit-Catcher | 100 |
| 3 | Watchmen, each 19 $\frac{1}{3}$ Thalers | 58 |
| 1 | Constable | 52 |
| 1 | Keeper (of the Woods) | 52 |
| 1 | Fisherman | 20 |
| 1 | Coalman | 23 |
| 1 | Boatman | 12 |
| 1 | Miller | 57 |
| 1 | Chimney Sweep | 84 |
| 1 | Rat-Catcher | 11 |
| <hr/> 307 | Total | <hr/> 37363 ¹ |

These salaries were, of course, but a tithe of the expenses of the Hanoverian Court under George Augustus.

| | Thalers. |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Salaries | 37,363 |
| Household and Kitchens | 144,722 |
| Court Uniforms and Liveries | 8,205 |
| Plate Room (purchases) | 414 |
| Furniture and Kitchen Utensils | 1,725 |
| Linen, Bedding, Wash-house, etc... .. | 1,580 |

¹ Malortie : *Der Hannoversche Hof*, pp. 37-41.

| | Thalers. |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Building Operations.. .. | 24,950 |
| Apothecary and Drugs | 425 |
| Stables and Granary | 34,954 |
| Hunting, Fishing, and Falconry | 2,565 |
| Gardens | 855 |
| Theatre | 5,740 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 263,498 ¹ |

Even this annual expenditure of nearly £40,000 a year, a vast sum in those days, does not include many items of considerable magnitude. There were pensions to old servants which, to his credit, Ernest Augustus was the first Prince of his House to bestow ; allowances made by him to his wife and children, and, it is fair to assume a considerable amount for his personal expenses—the expenses of his visit to Italy in 1685 amounted to twenty thousand thalers, seven thousand of which were spent on a single *fête*. There was further the money with which he provided his mistresses, especially the Countess von Platen. For the latter he built the mansion of Monplaisir, on the road from Hanover to Herrenhausen, and there she and her husband lived splendidly. They kept open house, and every evening had card-parties,

¹ Under John Frederick, in 1678, the salary list had been 55,000 Thalers as against 37,363, and the total 285,927 Thalers as against 263,498. In 1678, the receipts were 342,206 Thalers, of which 77,000 Thalers were derived from the Harz mines.

or balls, or receptions, to which the Court came ; and they rivalled royalty itself in the magnificence of their lackeys, clad in red liveries with massive silver buttons, and their equipages, drawn by magnificent horses, with red velvet trappings and red silk traces.¹

¹ Vehse : *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*.

CHAPTER IX

THE COURT OF HANOVER UNDER GEORGE LEWIS

LIKE his brothers, George William and John Frederick, Ernest Augustus was fond of Italy, and even after his accession to the Duchy of Hanover, he visited that country whenever he could leave his state. He was there in 1680 with his wife and daughter ; and in 1681 he went again, this time accompanied by the Count and Countess von Platen, and remained away from his duchy for two years. He returned to Hanover to be present at the marriage of his daughter in October 1684 ; but in the following year repaired to Venice, where he was joined by his daughter-in-law, Sophia Dorothea, and also by his eldest son, George Lewis, who had been fighting in Hungary.

Though only too glad to lay aside the trappings of state, Ernest Augustus was in public, however, a stickler for etiquette, and at Court was a martinet. Born with a taste for magnificence, his travels in many lands had happily tempered this dangerous quality with some degree of art. While Bishop of Osnabrück he had followed humbly in the footsteps of John Frederick, and to the best

of his ability and to the full extent of his means had imitated the ducal splendours at his Castle of Iburg, and it has been recorded that he had a Parisian *maitre d'hotel*, and interested himself in the selection of costumes for his wife and her ladies-in-waiting. When he succeeded to the dukedom he made little or no change in the features of the Court, beyond effecting certain economies.

At this time the Court of Celle was as French as that of Versailles, for the Duchess, being a Frenchwoman, had induced her husband to bestow innumerable household and regimental appointments upon her countrymen. This preference for the foreigner over the native was so marked as to give point to Pöllnitz's story: "I have been told that these Frenchmen really thought themselves so much at home," he has related, "that there happened to be one day no less than a dozen of them at dinner at the Duke's table, who all except the Prince were Frenchmen; which one of them observing, said to the Duke: 'My lord, this is really very pleasant; there is no foreigner here but you.'"¹ At Hanover, too, though there were fewer Frenchmen, the Court was to the full as French. "*La Cour de Hannover qui suit toutes les manières de celle de France,*

¹ *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 62.

l'imite aussi dans ses divertissements." ("The Court of Hanover which copies all the ways of the French Court, also imitates the latter in its amusements"), noted a writer in *Le Mercure Galant* in May 1684; and he gives as an instance the ballet, which had been little in favour in Germany, but was now a feature of the entertainments, and figured, with a masquerade, on the occasion of the marriage of Ernest Augustus's daughter, and again two months later among the festivities given in honour of the visit of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel and his wife.

In spite of the fact that George Lewis has in England invariably been represented as mean and avaricious, he had in his earlier days entertained lavishly at his hunting seat, the Castle at Göhrde, and as Elector he kept up the traditions of his predecessors, and in his capital spent money royally. "George Lewis . . . kept up a considerable body of troops, and had a very splendid court,"¹ says Pöllnitz; and Toland's account runs, "The Court in general is extremely polite; and even in Germany it is accounted the best, both for civility and decorum. The vice of drinking (for which that nation is so much branded) is so far from reigning here, that though nobody is abridged of his pleasure in this respect, yet I never

¹ *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 68.

knew greater sobriety nor a more exact government in a private family. It is not for me to pretend to judge of their entertainments. Strangers of figured quality are commonly invited to the Elector's table, where they are amazed to find such easy conversation, and to be allowed a liberty that nobody who deserves it will abuse. At Court hours all people of fashion meet there without any manner of constraint ; and provided these know what difference to make between men and things (which everybody that comes there is supposed to do) they may freely talk of any subject even with the Elector himself."¹ Toland's account was confirmed by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu when she visited Hanover years later, and noted that George Lewis dined and supped constantly in public, and was very affable and good-natured. Indeed, the only discordant note on the subject is to be found in the correspondence of the Duchess of Orleans, who complained that at the Court of George Lewis there was not the same courtesy as when his father reigned.

The official residence of the Elector of Hanover was not, of course, Herrenhausen, but the Palace on the Leine river, situated in the heart of the city, which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu thought "capable of holding a greater court than St.

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 53.

James's." The latter had been a monastery, and had first been used as a residence in 1636 by Duke George of Brunswick-Celle—the grandfather of George Lewis—when he desired a residence in his town. "The apartments of the Palace are very fine, and richly furnished," says Toland, who visited it in 1702; and he noted that it had been so metamorphosed that there remained no trace of its origin.¹ Pöllnitz, however, thought it "rather commodious than magnificent."² In the Palace was a theatre, built after the style of the Vienna Opera House, and consisting of four tiers, with sixty boxes for the royal family and the nobility. Under Ernest Augustus in 1688 a new house was built and the Abbé Agostino Steffani appointed director; and next to the royal box, which was on the grand tier to the right, was that reserved for the Countess von Platen, by the side of which was the Princess's *loge*, the Electress Sophia's being opposite her husband's. The theatre, one of the finest in Germany in its day, was "visited as a rarity by all travellers, as being the best painted and the best contrived in all Europe," Toland wrote enthusiastically, and his ardour was not damped when he learnt that "Nobody pays money that goes to a play there,

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 52.

² *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 53.

the Prince, as in some other Courts of Germany, being at all the expense to entertain the town as well as the Court."¹

"The ladies are perfectly well-bred, obliging, and many of them handsome," Toland mentions; and he speaks of the Baroness von Kielmansegg, her sister-in-law, the Countess von Platen, and Fräulein von der Schulenburg as the leading spirits of the Court. It was, of course, the age of paint and patches, and the fashion was as much in evidence in Hanover as in England. "I have now got into the region of beauty," Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote from Hanover in 1716. "All the women have literally rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eye-brows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. These perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle-light, but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much as Mrs. Salmon's [wax-work] Court of Great Britain, and are in as much danger of melting away by too near approaching the fire, which they for that reason carefully avoid, though it is now

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 53.

"The King's company of French comedians play here every night. They are very well dressed, and some of them not ill actors."—Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Bristol, December 1716.

such excessive cold weather, that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial."

Gallantry rivalled hunting as a pastime ; and other amusements there as elsewhere were riding and driving, and, in winter, sledging¹ in the day, and in the evening music, dancing, and the theatre, with occasional reviews and state functions : very little different from the happy, pleasant, shameless Court in which George Lewis and his brothers were trained.

When George Lewis ascended the English throne he made no alteration in the Court of Hanover, so that, Pöllnitz says, " not seeing him was the only token of his absence."

¹ " The snow is already very deep, and people begin to slide about in their *traineaus*. This is a favourite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge, that hold a lady and gentleman, and are drawn by one horse. The gentleman has the honour of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the *traineau*, are all as fine as they can be made ; and when there are many of them together, it is a very agreeable show." —Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Lady Rich, December 12th, 1716 (*Letters*, ed. Thomas, Vol. I, p. 137).



From a portrait in the Fürstenhaus at Herrenhausen

THE ELECTRESS SOPHIA

CHAPTER X

THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION. I

1689-1708

It may be assumed that so long as James II sat on the throne of Britain, Sophia, Duchess of Hanover, thought not at all of the prospect of being called one day to govern the dominions of her grandfather, James I ; and, indeed, as all students of English history are aware, the chance was so remote as to be negligible. The revolution of 1688 which deposed James II and placed his eldest daughter and her husband on the throne, however, greatly changed the aspect of the matter. Of course William and Mary might have issue, or, if not, either might die and the survivor marry again and have children ; otherwise Anne would succeed, and she might have children who would outlive her. Besides the " Pretender," born on June 10, 1688, whom it was at the moment unnecessary to take into account, there were in the line of succession after Anne and before Sophia some three-score other persons ; but it so happened that all these folk were Roman Catholics, and it was scarcely within the bounds of possibility that England, which had dethroned one of his faith, would elect

to be governed by another. It may here be mentioned that in the Hanoverian royal family, besides Duke John Frederick and his consort Benedicta Henrietta, Maximilian William, a younger brother of the Elector George Lewis, became a Roman Catholic; and that in the elder branch of the House of Brunswick, Duke Anthony Ulrich of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was converted in 1710. In the Electress Sophia's family among those who abjured the Protestant faith were her brother Edward, her sister, Louisa Hollandina, who became Abbess of Manbuesson, and her niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, who joined the Roman Catholic Church on the occasion of her marriage to the Duke of Orleans.

Still, though Roman Catholics usually adhere steadfastly to their religion, it was yet conceivable that, tempted by the enormous bribe of the English throne, one of them might turn Protestant. Indeed, the Duke of Savoy, the husband of Anne, daughter of Henrietta of Orleans, and granddaughter of Charles I, told Marshal von der Schulenburg that the British Resident at Turin had made overtures to him, on behalf of the English Parliament to send his son to London, to be brought up in the tenets of the Church of England, and so to qualify for the succession. This might have come to pass but that the Duke,

persuaded by Louis XIV, deserted the cause of the Allies, and so compelled William of Orange to conclude the Peace of Ryswick—a disappointment that William never forgave, and the memory of which induced him to throw the weight of his influence in the matter of the succession against the House of Savoy and in favour of the House of Hanover.¹

William's prejudice against the Duke of Savoy opened the way for Sophia, and this was clearly shown when the King, shortly after his accession, wrote to her that he relied on the support of the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg, "*Vous êtes si intéressée en ce qui peut concerner le bien de ces royaumes,*" he said, "*puisque selon les apparences un des vos fils y regnera un jour, que je suis faire conte que je trouverais des bons alliés à toute la maison de Lunenburg,*" etc., etc.² ("You are so closely concerned in the welfare of this kingdom, since in all probability one of your sons will eventually succeed to the throne, that I am sure I shall find a faithful ally in the House of Lüneburg," etc., etc.). To this intimation that she had a stake in the country, Sophia made answer: "After the profession which I have always made

¹ Kemble: *State Papers*, pp. 43-44.

² Schaumann: *Geschichte des Erwerbung der Krone Grossbritanniens*, p. 6.

of being an humble servant to your Majesty, I believe you cannot doubt of the part which I take in everything that contributes to your elevation and your glory ; yet I lament King James, who honoured me with his friendship. I should be afraid your Majesty would have a bad opinion of my sincerity if I concealed from you this sentiment ;—I am even persuaded that my candour will give you a better opinion of me, and that your Majesty will the more easily believe the protestation which I make you of my prayers for your prosperity, and of the opinion I have, that you deserve the crown which you wear, in a thousand respects which I am unable to name, from the fear of shocking your modesty. However, as it has pleased God to make your Majesty the protector of our religion, I hope you will put it also in a state to have its arms free, to assist us poor mortals, who, by the desolation of our neighbours, are near to that roaring beast which endeavours to devour us, in order that all those who are not papists may successively maintain the religion we profess to all eternity, in England and elsewhere ; and that your Majesty may count among the most zealous, one who shall be all her life," etc.¹

Sophia's affection for James II was sincere, and

¹ Dalrymple : *Memoirs*, Vol. II, Part ii, pp. 127-8.

it extended, for the father's sake, to his son, whose claims she urged in 1692 in a letter to George Stepney, the British envoy at the Court of Brandenburg, should not be put aside without further consideration. She told him that she was, of course, aware of the intention to settle the crown of England on her and her family, after the death of William and Anne without issue, and that she thought very highly of this notice; but, she reminded him, that there was the great drawback that she and her children were strangers to England, and used to a very different form of government, and then recommended to him and his friends, "the unhappy case of *le pauvre Prince de Galles*," expressing the wish that he may be thought of rather than her family, for "he had learned and suffered so much by his father's errors, that he would certainly avoid all of them and make a good King of England."¹ That the kindly feeling endured is shown by an amusing story told by Lady Louisa Stuart. When Lord Halifax and Lord Dorset came to Hanover in 1706 to present the Electress with the Bill of Naturalisation, at their first formal interview, while one of them began a set speech, he was astonished to observe the stately elderly lady to whom he had presented his credentials, give a violent start, and

¹ Burnet: *History of His Own Time*, Vol. IV, p. 501.

hurry to a corner of the room where she stood during the rest of the ceremony, stiff and erect against the wall. As her behaviour was at all other times most dignified, the envoys could not imagine what had prompted this extraordinary proceeding. She had suddenly remembered that in that corner hung a portrait of her cousin, "*ce pauvre Prince de Galles*," the sight of which, she thought, might have embarrassed the English envoys ; and the only way to hide it that occurred to her on the spur of the moment was to screen it with her own person !

Sophia corresponded with James II, and also with the Pretender : "Valuing her Stuart descent," Lady Louisa Stuart has written, "she had a family feeling for the young man whom she firmly believed to be as much James II's son, as George I was her own : that is to say, she was at the time what all England would have styled a rank Jacobite !"¹ She was never at any pains to hide this fact, and was very free in her discourse, avowing to Lord Dartmouth, who visited her in the reign of William and Mary, that, "she had a constant correspondence with King James and his daughter, our Queen, with many particulars of his being a very weak man, and her being a very good

¹ Lady M. W. Montagu : *Letters. With Introductory Anecdotes by Lady Louisa Stuart* (ed. Thomas) ; Vol. I, p. xcvi.

woman.”¹ There has been preserved one letter from Queen Mary to Sophia, dated 1689, which gives a hint of the subject on which they interchanged views. “Many people have the good fortune to be able to speak of matters, about which I must preserve silence,” the Queen wrote. “You will not doubt the sincerity of my feelings, even though I cannot forget my father, and complain of his ill-fortune.”²

Sophia's letters to the exiled King found their way into the hands of William III, for when his papers were examined after his death, a packet was found, endorsed in his handwriting, “Letters of Sophia to the Court of St. Germain's.” Exactly the nature of the contents is unknown, for the packet was destroyed by order of George I after his accession to the English throne; but some letters to Sophia from James II and his consort have been preserved, which show that, in spite of the question of the succession, there was no bad feeling between them. This is to be seen in the letter of condolence from James II to the Electress on the death of her husband—

“*St. Germain's, March [6], 1698.*

“I hope you will easily do me so much right as

¹ Burnet: *History of His Own Time*, Vol. IV, p. 203.

² Schaumann: *Geschichte der Erwerbung der Krone Grossbritanniens*, p. 9.

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to beleve, I was sensibly touched at the great losse you have made, for tho' it has been long since you had reason to expect it, yett a good wife can never be so prepared as not to be sensibly afflicted when it happens, and you will have had great need of true Christian resignation, to beare it with any pacience. I hope God will preserue you and all yours, and euer make you happy in this world, as well as in the other, none can desire it more than myself w^{ch}. desire you to beleue, as being so nearly related to you, and being very acknowledgling for all the marks of esteeme and kindness you have so often shewed me, you may always rely on the continuance of myne.

“JAMES R.”¹

When the Bill of Rights and Succession was introduced into the English Parliament in 1689, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, proposed in the House of Lords to mention therein by name as in the direct line of succession Sophia and her heirs. This amendment was accepted without opposition in the Upper House, but was thrown out in the Commons ; whereupon William, who had probably instigated Burnet's proposal, had a clause inserted disabling all Papists, or such as should marry Papists, from succession to the

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 221.

Crown, thus securing the throne to Sophia, without naming her.¹ Then, on July 27, 1689, was born a son to Princess Anne, William, Duke of Gloucester; and so for a while no further step in the matter of the Hanoverian succession was called for. On April 17, 1693, Anne gave birth to another and her last child, George, but this boy lived only long enough to be baptised.

Though nothing was done for some time, the question of the succession was not dismissed from the minds of those principally concerned, and William, who had visited Sophia at Hanover in 1680, in 1695 when staying with the Duke of Celle at the hunting-seat of Göhrde, had a meeting with Sophia and George Lewis, at which, it is believed, such future measures as might be necessary were agreed upon.² How advisable was this precaution was soon shown when the young Duke of Gloucester, a delicate child, caught smallpox on his eleventh birthday, and died three days later, July 30, 1700.

In the October following the death of the young Duke, Sophia with her daughter visited William at Loo, when, it has been said, the King discussed with the Electress his favourite project that she should on his death succeed to the English throne,

¹ Coxe: *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, Vol. I, pp. 14-15.

² Halliday: *House of Guelph*, p. 143.

to the exclusion of the Princess Anne.¹ Whether Sophia declined to enter into this agreement, whether William himself abandoned the scheme, or whether it was found impracticable need not be discussed ; it fell through, and no more was heard of it. In the next year the Act of Settlement was introduced into the English Parliament and became law. This limited the succession to the Protestant line, and decreed "That the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, daughter of the Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James the First, should be next in succession to the crown of Great Britain."²

The Earl of Macclesfield (the "Mylord Mackelsfield" of the Electress's letters) was at once sent

¹ When the old Electress of Hanover visited William at Loo, her visit may have had reference to a favourite project of that sovereign—namely, the immediate succession of the Electress to the throne, on his demise, to the exclusion of the Princess Anne. His papers, discovered at Kensington after his decease, contained many references to this subject ; and it may have been that it was because he had so alluded to the matter, that he was reluctant to treat of it verbally. The report was certainly current at the time, that among the defunct King's papers was a written recommendation, or what might be interpreted as such, to invite the Electress of Hanover and her son to take possession of the throne of England after his death."—Doran : *Lives of the Queens of England*, Vol. I, p. 100.

² See Appendix D.

LORD MACCLESFIELD'S EMBASSY 133

to Hanover to deliver the Act of Succession to Sophia and to invest George Lewis with the Garter. Lord Macclesfield was accompanied by Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Tunbridge, and Lord Mohun, and in his train was a minor personage, John Toland, to whom we are indebted for an account of the embassy, and a valuable picture of the Hanoverian Court of that day.¹ It was a great occasion in the life of the Electress, and she and her son did all that lay in their power to do honour to the envoy and his suite.

Lord Macclesfield, it was written down by Toland, "was received by deputies of the best quality on the frontiers of the country, and his expenses were defrayed on the road with all his retinue, till he arrived at Hanover. There one of the largest houses of the whole city was assigned for his entertainment, and to lodge as many of the gentlemen that accompanied him as he would please to have near him, the rest being disposed into other houses of the neighbourhood at the Elector's charge. During all the time of his stay, not only between thirty and forty gentlemen who came along with him, but likewise all Englishmen that passed that way, were treated on free cost. It was a continued feasting, and I do not exceed when I say, that the two great tables kept in this

¹ See Appendix A.

English hotel were as plentifully and as sumptuously furnished the last day as the first. All the servants had half-a-crown a day given them in good silver pieces to provide for themselves ; for they would not disgrace them, it seems, with their master's broken meat, nor be at the trouble to dress for them in particular. The citizens had orders, which they observed, not to take anything for meat and drink of any Englishman, if his humour should lead him to desire it. The Elector's own servants waited on them every morning with silver coffee and tea-pots to their chambers. Burgundy, champagne, Rhenish, and all manner of wines were as common as beer. A number of coaches and chairs were appointed to bring them every day to Court, to carry them back to their lodgings, and to go withersoever else they would. They were entertained with music, balls, and plays ; and every person made it his business to oblige them. There was a very fine ball, and a splendid appearance of ladys, the evening after my lord delivered the Act of Succession to the Electress. His Lordship did often eat at the Electoral table, and some of the gentlemen were always there in their turns. They were frequently entertained by the Ministers of State ; and if any of them (as I know of none) did misbehave himself, it could not well be otherwise among so many young

people ; and I defy the like number, unless they should be picked on purpose, to carry themselves more decently. Most of them met together by chance in Holland, and the half of them did not come in his Lordship's train out of England."¹

Anything, after the passing of the Act of Settlement, that could happen to Sophia, except the actual accession, was in the nature of an anticlimax. Still, there were during the next few years some matters of interest to her and her eldest son. Though Anne had not abandoned hope of having another child, still, after the death of William III on March 8, 1702, she permitted the inclusion of the name of the Electress Sophia in the Prayer for the Royal Family in the Book of Common Prayer, and sent the Earl of Stamford to Hanover with an early impression of the new edition.² She also, shortly after her accession, wrote to George Lewis—

" *A St. James, ce 16^e April, 1702.*

" *Mon Cousin,*

" *La douleur que vous faites paroître dans votre Lettre du 19^e Mars, pour la Mort du feu Roy Mon Frère, est très juste, et les Sentimens que vous y*

¹ Toland : *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover.*

² *Portland MSS.*, Vol. IV, p. 57.

temoignés avoir pour moy, me sont fort agréables. Je suis très aise que le public soit si bien satisfait des declarations que j'ay faites, et j'auray soin que les effets y repondent. Je ne manquerez pas d'avoir une amitié et une consideration toute particuliere pour votre famille, au bien de laquelle je me trouve interessée par tant de liens ; et comme ses Interestes sont tous unis et concentrés dans votre personne, cela ne peut qu'augmenter l'estime et la bienveillance que vous trouverés toujours en celle qui est avec beaucoup de verité,

" Mon Cousin,

" Votre bien affectionnée Cousine,

" ANNE R.

" A mon Cousin,

" Le Prince Electoral de Brunsvic et Lünebourg." ¹

In December 1704, and again in the following year, the Duke of Marlborough visited the Elector George Lewis, and advised him not to countenance the Tory scheme to induce the Electress to take up her residence in England. William III and Queen Mary had more than once suggested that Sophia should visit England, and the prospect was one near her heart, for she declared she would dearly love to see England, and hoped to be buried by her

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 267.

mother in Westminster Abbey ; but during her husband's lifetime she could not bring herself to leave him, and after his death she stayed at Hanover to watch over her younger children. The proposal that she should reside in this country was repeated in 1707 by Rochester, Haversham, and the Tory leaders, and again in 1712 by the Whigs ; but all these invitations were declined, though it is not clear whether the refusals were dictated by her own common sense—for Queen Anne, as will presently appear, was bitterly opposed to any such scheme—or were due to the interposition of the Elector.

There is in existence a forgotten pamphlet containing a letter from Sophia to the Archbishop of Canterbury,¹ in reply to such an invitation—

“ My Lord,

“ I received your Grace's Letter : You have no reason to make any excuse that you have not Writ to me more often : For I do not judge of People's Friendship for me, by the good Words they give me, but I depend upon your *Integrity*, and what you tell me in general of the *Honest Men* of England. I desire no further Assurance of their good Will and Affection to me, unless they think

¹ Thomas Tenison (1636–1715), Archbishop of Canterbury from 1694.

it necessary for the Good of the *Protestant Religion*, the *Publick Liberties* of *Europe*, and the *People* of *England*. I thank God, I am in good *Health*, and live in *Quiet* and with *Content* here, therefore I have no reason to desire to change my way of Living, on the Account of any Personal Satisfaction, that I can propose to my self. However, I am ready and willing to comply with whatever can be desired of me, by my Friends, in case that the *Parliament* think, that it is for the *Good* of the Kingdom, to Invite me into *England*.

“ But I suppose they will do this in such a manner, as will make my coming agreeable to the *Queen*, whom I shall ever Honour, and endeavour to deserve her *Favour* ; of which she hath given me many *Publick Demonstrations*, by what She hath done for me in *England and Scotland*, which you can judge of more particularly : And I most remember that She Order'd me to be Pray'd for in the *Churches*.

“ I doubt not, but Her Majesty is as much inclin'd at present to Establish the safety of the *Three Kingdoms* upon such a Foot, that They may be exposed to the least Hazard, that is possible ; and that She will begin with *England*.

“ Mr. *How[e]* has Acquainted me with Her Majesty's *Good Inclinations* for my Family ; which makes me think, that, perhaps, Her Majesty sees

this is a proper time for Her to Express Herself in our Favour. But whether I am right in this Point or not, my Friends in England can best judge.

"It is but reasonable, that I should submit myself to their Opinions and Advise, which will ever have the greatest Weight with me.

"Therefore I Write the more plainly to You, and tell You my Thoughts, that You may Communicate them to *All* You think fit. For they will then see that I have great Zeal for the *Good of England*, and a most sincere *Respect* for the *Queen*.

"This is the best Proof that I can give, at present, of my Esteem for Your Grace: But I shall be glad of further Opportunities to assure you, that I am, and shall ever be most sincerely

"My Lord,

"*Votre très affectionnée à vous servir,*

"SOPHIE ELECTRICE.¹

"*Hanover, November 3rd, 1705.*"

So early as 1701 George Stepney had written to the Electress saying that public opinion in England was favourable to the Hanoverian succession, and Lord Pembroke assured her that the eyes of the English people were turned to her, not as the outcome of a party question but as the

¹ *A Letter from Princess Sophia to the Archbishop of Canterbury, . . ., 1706.*

choice of the nation ; while Elkanah Settle gave vent to his enthusiasm in verse—

“ When Hannover on Britain’s Head show’rs down
Th’ immense Returns for thy presented Crown ;
The thousand Blessings for one Gift so kind ;
(For when to true protecting Hands resign’d,
Empire is only Gratitude refin’d)
How shall Fame chant this Union all divine
When with thy *Lyons* shall his *Eagles* joyn ? ”¹

Public opinion was even more strongly expressed when, on the death of James II at St. Germain, Louis XIV recognised her son as James III, King of England, for this was regarded as an insult to the country. Sophia, however, was not carried away by the assurances concerning the succession conveyed to her from many sources, and she never at any time underrated the difficulties that would have to be overcome before she, or, in the event of her death, her son, could ascend the English throne. “ If I were thirty years younger I should entertain a sufficiently good opinion of my blood and my religion to believe that the thoughts of England might turn to me. But as there is only the most remote chance that I shall outlive King William and the Princess Anne, who although in worse health than I, are yet much younger, I fear that after my death my sons will be regarded as strangers in my country. . . . I am not so

¹ *The Hanoverian Succession*, 1702, p. 41.

philosophical or so foolish as not to find pleasure in speaking of a crown, and do not make any criticism of your sound pronouncements on the subject. It seems to me, however, that in England, so long as there are parties, it is wise not to feel assured of anything. This does not prevent me from being much indebted to those who show regard for me and my children . . .,"¹ so the Electress wrote to George Stepney in the summer of 1701 ; and in the following year Leibnitz, her confidential adviser, in a letter to Sir Peter Fraser enunciated the rules of conduct by which she intended to regulate her attitude : " Madame the Electress has always thought it was not for her to put herself forward in England or Scotland, consequently she left to the late King, and still leaves to the Queen and the two nations, the care of thinking upon what is most advantageous to themselves at the present time. She is naturally an enemy of intrigues, and likes to travel the broad way. She cherishes persons of honour and merit, and prizes their affection, setting a high value on your own."²

However, though Sophia was careful to avoid any show of eagerness to ascend the English throne, in her heart she hoped she might survive

¹ *Hardwicke State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 442-443.

² Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 261.

to succeed to it, and she once declared she would die happy if she lived long enough to have inscribed on the tomb, "Here lies Sophia, Queen of England." "No sooner had King William procured a settlement of the British Crown, after Queen Anne, on her Electoral Highness, than nobody became a stauncher Whig than Princess Sophia, nor could anyone be more impatient to mount the throne of the expelled Stuarts,"¹ Horace Walpole has written; but he does the Electress less than justice. It has been mentioned that she was attached to James II and the Pretender, and had there been any chance of their return to England, it is highly improbable that Sophia would have set herself up as a rival claimant to the throne; but, since that seemed in the highest degree improbable, she was not disloyal to them in consenting to be nominated for the succession. She certainly had no dislike to the prospect of the Crown, and she never made any pretence that this was unwelcome; and, indeed, she was not ungrateful that fate threw in her way the chance of returning to her mother's native country. She prized her descent highly, and, Lord Dartmouth has recorded, "She took it unkindly that the Duke of Celle should have the

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cxiii.

Garter before her husband, who, she thought, might have expected it upon her account.”¹

The daughter of an Englishwoman, she always regarded herself as English: “The Electress is entirely English in her person, in her behaviour, in her humour, and all her inclinations,” Toland wrote; and to be English was a sure passport to her favour, even before the Act of Succession, whereas even afterwards she made no distinction at the Court in her reception of Whig or Tory. “There it is enough that you are an Englishman, nor can you ever discover by your treatment which are better liked, the Whigs or the Tories:” Toland is again the authority. “There are the instructions given to all servants, and they take care to execute them with the utmost exactness. I was the first who had the honour of kneeling and kissing her hand on account of the Act of Succession; and she said among other discourse, that she was afraid the nation had already repented their choice of an old woman, but that she hoped none of her posterity would give her [England] any reasons to grow weary of their dominion.” She spoke the language with little or no foreign accent, was full of admiration for the tolerance accorded to the Dissenters in what she loved to call “her own country,” and she was never weary

¹ Burnet: *History of His Own Time*, Vol. IV, p. 203.

of asking questions about English families, laws, and customs. She had long ago set herself to study the intricacies of the British constitution, and, though she could not interest her eldest son in her studies, she frequently delivered long lectures on the subject to Sophia Dorothea—which, it cannot be disguised, bored that Princess excessively.

Various Acts of importance to Sophia and her family were passed by the English Parliament in 1705, and in April of the following year Lord Halifax, Joseph Addison, and Sir John Vanbrugh (Clarenceux King-at-Arms) arrived at Hanover to present copies of the Bill of Naturalisation for the Electoral family¹ and the Regency Act², and to invest with the Garter the Electoral Prince, who, on November 9, was created by Anne Baron of Tewkesbury, Viscount of Northallerton, Earl of Milford Haven, and Marquis and Duke of Cambridge.

“Whereas,” so ran the preamble to this patent of nobility, which is interesting because of the hint that the Electoral Prince was not expected to come to England, “the more Serene Electoral House of Brunswick-Lünenburgh is sprung from the Royal Stock of our Ancestors, and in case of

¹ See Appendix E.

² See Appendix F.

our Death without Issue, ought (according to the Laws ratified by our Authority) to enjoy the Kingdoms of their Progenitors ; yet as we earnestly desire that the said most Serene House should no less be tied to us by Friendship, than by Blood and Alliances ; we according to our singular Affection towards the same, have decreed to grace, with the Highest Honours, our most, dear Cousin, GEORGE AUGUSTUS, Son to the most Serene Elector. And although the only Son of so great a Prince cannot go out of his native Country without the utmost danger, especially at this time, when the neighbouring States are tossed with such violent Tempests ; to the end nevertheless, that as much as possible, he may, by the Authority of his Name and Dignity, though absent, be in a manner present to our Parliament and Councils, we have ordered him to be added to the Number of the Peers of this Realm. This will be to him an Earnest of that Supreme Dignity, to which (according to ours, and the Wishes of all our Subjects) he is destined : that being henceforth adorned with the Title of this most noble Kingdom, which the Princes of the Blood Royal have always Courted, he may be Proud to be ours. You, therefore, the Barons, Viscounts, Earls, Marquises, and Dukes, congratulate with yourselves, that a Prince of so great Hopes, the

Ornament and Darling of GERMANY, the Defender of our most Holy Religion, and the Asserter of Public Liberty, one that is hereafter to govern you, and till then is one of you, should now delight to be vested with the same Honours with you, etc.”

The Regency Act called upon the Electress to appoint Lords Justices, who, with the Great Officers of the Crown, would carry on the government on the death of Queen Anne, until Sophia should arrive in England. Halifax submitted a list of twenty-one names, and it afterwards appeared—for the list was sealed up by Sophia only to be opened should occasion arise—that the Electress struck out several names, including that of Halifax.¹ The Electoral family had no great faith in Anne’s sincerity, but George, as well as his mother, made courteous acknowledgment of the letters brought by her envoys.

“ *June 28, 1706.*

“ Madam,

“ My Lord Halifax delivered to me the letter which your Majesty was so good as to give him

¹ The names retained by Sophia were : The Archbishop of York (for the time being) ; the Dukes of Somerset, Ormonde, Bolton, Marlborough, and Montagu ; the Earls of Bridgewater, Manchester, Peterborough, Rivers, Stamford, Sunderland, Radnor, and Oxford ; and Barons Wharton, Mohun, Raby, Lexington, and Somers.

charge for me. The three Acts of Parliament which he brought are convincing proofs of the obliging attentions which your Majesty continues to pay to the interests of my family. I entreat you to be persuaded of the gratitude which I shall preserve for this all my lifetime. I am likewise sensible of the honour which you conferred on the Electoral Prince by giving him the order of the Garter. My Lord Halifax gave me all possible explanations with regard to the three Acts: I am much obliged to your Majesty for the choice you made of a minister of such capacity and distinction to be the bearer of them. He acquitted himself of the commission with great zeal. I desire nothing more ardently than opportunities of convincing your Majesty to what degree I am penetrated with your goodness, and that

"I am, with a profound respect, Madam, etc.,

"GEORGE LEWIS, *Elector*." ¹

These visits of English Ambassadors Extraordinary were not altogether welcome to Sophia, who complained that they brought nothing but titles and empty compliments; and she made no secret of the fact that she hoped she would not be put to further expense in this way—her present of

¹ Macpherson: *Original Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 51-52 (Macpherson's translation of Robethon's draft).

gold plate to Halifax cost her 30,000 florins—as she would be perfectly content to receive any messages from the Queen or the English Parliament through the medium of Howe, the resident minister.¹

After George Lewis inherited the Duchies of Celle-Lüneburg in 1705, it occurred to some English statesmen that many difficulties might arise from England and the Electorate of Hanover being under the same sovereign ; and it was thought then that it would be a great advantage if the head of the House of Hanover on succeeding to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland should make over the sovereignty of his German dominions to the next heir. According to Richard, Earl of Scarborough, who said he had it from Lord Halifax, a proposal that this should be made a condition of the succession was submitted to George Lewis, who refused to discuss the matter, declaring that under no circumstances would he accept the English Crown at the sacrifice of his German dominions, where he reigned secure in his tenure ; and with equal curtness he declined to consider the suggestion, put forward after this

¹ Ward: *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*, p. 223.

Emanuel Scope Howe, English minister at Hanover from 1705 until his death in 1709.

refusal, that the English Crown should go to some other Protestant member of his family. "If the Crown of England comes to my family," he said, "no one shall wear it before me except my mother."¹

Macpherson suggested that at this time the Electress entertained little hope that her family would ever mount the throne, and that she placed no value on the Regency Act or the Naturalisation Bill;² but it is not easy to see why she should not have been hopeful, for the chances at this time were in her favour, since in 1706 there was only a choice for the English people between her and her heirs and the Pretender. Indeed, Macpherson thinks that soon she changed her sentiments, and if she really wanted proof of the feeling of England, it was to be found in the facts that nearly everyone who could claim any share in the passing of the Acts of Regency and Naturalisation began to pay court to her and her family, expressing attachment and zeal, which proceedings evinced at least a belief in the probability of the Hanoverian succession.

The succession to Scotland was assured in 1707 by the Union; and the prospect grew brighter in the following year when, after the death of George of Denmark, Anne announced that she would not remarry.

¹ Burnet: *History of His Own Time*, Vol. IV, p. 502.

² *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 338.

CHAPTER XI

THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION. II

1709-1714

It is not intended in this work to trace in detail the various intrigues in connection with the succession during the last seven years of the reign of Queen Anne ; and, indeed, to relate all the machinations of the Hanoverian party and the Jacobites—it is not accurate to say Whigs and Tories, since there were Hanoverian Tories—would fill volumes. It was a time when honesty and directness of purpose were at a discount among English politicians, and when nearly all statesmen were fighting for their own hands, changing their minds day by day : it cannot be said they shifted their allegiance with every breath, because while they were writing to the Elector with one hand, with the other they were giving signs of loyalty to the Pretender. They intrigued against their Queen, they undermined the position of their friends, and entered into secret treaties with their enemies ; and were never so forgetful of self as to be frank about their intentions. The history of this period is indeed a sickening record of treachery and duplicity. Two examples of this must suffice. The Duke

of Shrewsbury corresponded with the Elector, and, through his wife, with the Pretender. Marlborough who was sending assurances, through Marshal de Villars, of his attachment to the Stuart cause, wrote at the same time (August 3, 1710) to George Lewis, accusing Harley of Jacobitism, and professing his devotion to the House of Hanover, "with which," he said, "I consider those of my country and of all Europe inseparably connected. I hope the English nation will not permit themselves to be imposed upon by Harley and his associates. Their conduct leaves no doubt of their design of placing the pretended Prince of Wales on the throne. We feel too much already their bad intentions and pernicious designs. But I hope to be able to employ all my intention, all my credit, and all my friends, to advance the interest of the Electoral family, to prevent the destructive counsels of a race of men, who establish principles and form cabals, which will infallibly overturn the Protestant succession, and with it the liberty of their country and the safety of Europe."¹

Though in 1712 Parliament passed an Act granting the Electress Sophia and George Lewis precedence over all English subjects and entitling them to follow the Queen,² there was notwithstanding

¹ Macpherson : *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 457.

² See Appendix G.

a strong feeling in the country that the Protestant succession was not so well assured as it had been a few years earlier ; for though the Queen and her ministers declared again and again that it was in no danger, it was generally surmised that several members of the Government were in correspondence with the adherents of the Pretender, and that Anne desired her brother to succeed her. It was true, of course, that she did not make open confession of this, but that was explained by the fact that to declare the Pretender the lawful heir, was to pronounce her title to the throne invalid. Still, it was so well known in what direction lay her sympathies, that the Pretender ventured to write to her, urging his claim, and that in 1712 the Duke of Buckingham, a staunch Jacobite, was permitted to converse with her on the subject. He deduced from the remarks she let fall the tacit assurance that if the Pretender would become a Protestant she would favour his succession. "I could not think it proper to press further at this time, but rather chose to leave him [Anne] to his own reflections on what had passed. . . . I am convinced that if Harry [the Pretender] would return to the Church of England, all would be easy ; nay, for what I know, if he would but barely give hopes he would do so, my brother [Anne] would do all he can to leave him

his estate. I am satisfied he hates Dick [George], and loves Harry [the Pretender] now far better than ever.”¹ So the Duke of Buckingham wrote to the Earl of Middleton; and it shows that the alarm of the Hanoverian party was not ungrounded. The Jacobites, too, urged the Pretender, if his religious convictions were too strong to be abandoned, at least to make a show of joining the Church of England, in which case, they assured him, they could secure the repeal of the Act of Settlement.

However, to his credit, “the King over the water” was not by this or any other bribe to be induced to abandon his faith; and the only concessions he would grant were to have Protestant servants and to relinquish the privilege of appointing the bishops and the minor clergy. He had been sounded on the subject again and again, and on May 2, 1711, after giving assurances that he would respect the Church of England, “Plain dealing,” he wrote, “is best in all things, especially in matters of religion, and, as I am now resolved never to dissemble in religion, so I shall never tempt others to do so; and as well as I am satisfied of the truth of my own religion, yet I shall never look worse upon any persons, because in this they chance to differ with me: nor shall I refuse,

¹ Macpherson: *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 329.

in due time and place, to hear what they have to say upon this subject. But they must not take it ill if I use the same liberty I allow to others, to adhere to the religion which I, in my conscience, think the best ; and I may reasonably expect that liberty of conduct for myself, which I deny to none."¹ From this attitude he never moved. "I want neither counsel nor advice to remain unalterable in my fixed resolution, of never dissembling my religion," he wrote again on March 13, 1714 ; "but rather to abandon all than act against my conscience and honour, cost what it will."²

There was still the danger that Anne might throw the weight of her influence on the side of her brother, notwithstanding his determination to adhere to his religion. A sick, superstitious woman, she was frequently inclined to attribute the death of her children as a judgment upon her for the part she had taken in dethroning her father, and to believe that, having deserted the latter in the hour of his extreme need to secure the throne to her own posterity, Heaven had interfered to disappoint her designs. It is fair to assume that this train of thought was fostered by the Jacobites who thronged around her.

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 225.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 525.

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Another trouble of the Whigs at this time was the lukewarmness of George Lewis in the matter of the succession, for though Sophia was the heiress to the throne, she, to employ her own expression, was suffering from "the incurable disease of being over eighty years of age," and it was to George Lewis that all eyes were turned. Macpherson says that the Elector was indifferent concerning the succession,¹ and Halliday remarks that "his lukewarmness was discouraging to his friends in England, and gave serious offence to his aged parent";² and this view has been taken by subsequent historians, including Dr. Ward, who twenty years ago wrote: "King George I was never at the pains to conceal the fact that he had become ruler of these islands by force of circumstances rather than by his own choice."³

It is true that George Lewis refused in the most peremptory manner to give money to pension needy peers, and to employ political pamphleteers, for which purpose demand after demand, one of £100,000, afterwards reduced to half that sum, was made by the Whigs and the Hanoverian Tories. The Committee of the Calenburg Estates had placed seventy-five thousand pounds in the

¹ *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 585.

² *History of the House of Guelph*, p. 162.

³ *Great Britain and Hanover*, p. 5.

hands of the Hanoverian Resident in London—a fact that did not transpire for seventy years,¹ and George Lewis gave six hundred pounds to Lord Fitzwalter to repay a debt to Lord Sunderland. Beyond this, however, he would not go, pleading poverty as an excuse, and in return setting up a claim for a pension for the Electress Sophia and demanding arrears of pay due to him for troops lent to the English Government.

In vain his English supporters, even in 1713, asked for two thousand pounds to carry the Common Council elections, which body would then harass the Government and her ministers with remonstrances in favour of civil liberty and the Protestant succession; in vain they begged for money that might be given to indigent members of Parliament, who would then be able to vote according to their principles and not according to their necessities, and so terrify the Queen with remonstrances and addresses throughout the winter. All these pleadings went for nought; though at last Bernstorff, the President of the Elector's Council, told Marlborough and Cadogan that George might be induced to borrow twenty thousand pounds from his English friends for these purposes; but when Marlborough and

¹ Ward: *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession*, p. 207.

Cadogan offered to furnish the money at five per cent. interest, the matter went no further, because George Lewis would accept no responsibility either for the interest or the principal, save that, if the money was advanced, he would repay it when his mother or himself came to the throne.¹ From this and similar decisions neither his English supporters, nor his Hanoverian ministers could move him. "Such is the spirit of economy here, especially since the speedy return of our troops is looked for," Robethon wrote to von Grote, January 24, 1713, "that you must not expect the Elector will put his hand to his pocket, even for a masterstroke of policy, such as would be, beyond contradiction, to gain the Duke of Argyll and his brother ; although, according to Bernstorff, there is not room to hesitate a moment."²

That George Lewis's attitude might well lead folk to believe that he was indifferent to the succession to the English throne is easy to understand ; but even if he was very desirous to ascend the throne of Great Britain, there were, as will be shown, good reasons for his refusal to assist his supporters that put another complexion on the case. "I have always been of opinion that our Court would be the most Iroquois in the world,

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 624.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 467.

if it was to neglect its glory and advantage, and repay the affection of a great and flourishing nation with contempt," Leibnitz wrote to Baron von Schütz in April 1714. "Such an idea could never enter the head of any man of sense who knows us ; and yet in England there are several persons who have given themselves a good deal of pains to have it believed." And what was said by Leibnitz, the confidential adviser of the Elector, is most likely to be true ; certainly, on the face of it, there was wanting stronger ground for a Prince of the House of Brunswick to refuse such promotion, especially when such promotion would be of great value to his beloved state of Hanover, by vastly increasing the influence of its ruler. If, during the reign of Anne, George Lewis showed impatience, it is probably more accurate to attribute this, not necessarily to lack of desire to secure the sovereignty of the wealthiest country in the world, but to irritation aroused by the professions of politicians of whose insincerity he was well aware, and to annoyance caused by repeated demands on his purse by these untrustworthy supporters.

If, however, on the one hand, he dropped all correspondence with either party, on the other he allowed his servants to continue their efforts to safeguard his interests, and he listened attentively

to the intelligence they gleaned.¹ He thought it wiser, and events proved that he was right, to pursue a policy of masterly inactivity, believing that, by rigidly abstaining from participation and interference in the intrigues that were being carried on in England, he might more easily win the favour, or at least avoid the risk of arousing the dislike, of the English people, who resented nothing so much as the intervention of foreigners. Like an intelligent man he was willing to accept without demur any good that the gods might send him ; but he was not prepared to make sacrifices, since such sacrifices might well be unavailing. He and his confidential advisers—Leibnitz certainly, if not Robethon—must have realised that if the English were determined to have George Lewis, they would not have the Pretender, and that if they desired the Pretender they would not accept the Elector of Hanover as their sovereign. It would avail naught to buy the pens of pamphleteers, and it would be waste of money to subsidise men the majority of whom would at the critical moment throw their support into the scale of the winning side. The one principle to which George Lewis adhered with consistent firmness was, he was to be the catspaw of no man and of no party.

¹ Macpherson : *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 585.

“Should we fail to engage the Elector to agree to any of your proposals, we must, in prudence, provide for ourselves, and yield to the times.” In these words the Whigs issued their ultimatum, and his ministers urged him to comply with at least some portion of their demands, but George was to be moved as little by threats as by soft words. When the ministry showed unexpected strength by dismissing from their offices the Duke of Argyll, Lord Stair, and others suspected of a leaning to the House of Hanover, the Whigs, terrified by this firm front, raged impotently, declared no hope remained in the death of the Queen or the Pretender, and, quite unjustly, they accused the Elector of having sacrificed his friends as well as his hopes of the throne. But all the time they were saying and writing that they must “provide for themselves and yield to the times,” that is to say, abandon the Hanoverian cause, they knew they were too deeply committed to do so, at least to do so with any advantage to themselves. George, there is every reason to believe, knew this too, and doubtless this strengthened him in his refusal, for if there were persons who must work for him for nothing, why pay them?

The Whigs and the Hanoverian Tories being then in a position from which they could not withdraw, had no chance in these circumstances

but, for their own sake, to do the utmost for the cause to which they were pledged. If they were depressed by the thought that when the Peace of Utrecht (April 11, 1713) was made "the interests of the Pretender were kept in view, rather than those of the country, and the Queen was anxious that the French King should not be deprived of the power to afford him effectual assistance";¹ they were, almost immediately after, encouraged to persevere in the fight for the Hanoverian succession by some successes in Parliament, where, though by a small majority, they lost a motion that the Protestant succession was in danger, they actually carried an Address to the Queen inviting her to renew her efforts to secure the expulsion of the Pretender from Lorraine, and—this clause was added on the motion of the Duke of Wharton—to proclaim a reward for the apprehension of the Pretender, should he set foot in her dominions.

Anne showed her indignation at this Address by omitting, at the prorogation of Parliament in the following July, the usual formal words expressing her intention to secure the Protestant succession. This was thought to be most significant, and while

¹ Coxe: *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, Vol. I, p. 85.

George Lewis did not approve of this Peace, which fact annoyed Anne.

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it alarmed the adherents of the House of Hanover, it encouraged the Jacobite party, which redoubled its efforts. So marked was the activity of the latter, that on January 6, 1714, Marlborough wrote to Robethon : " The ministers drive on matters so fast in favour of the Pretender that everybody must agree if something is not done in the next sessions of Parliament towards securing the succession, it is to be feared it may be irretrievably lost " ; ¹ and in the following month Martines, the Minister at Paris of the Landgrave of Hesse, sent the following letter, dated February 19 (N.S.), to Robethon : " Everyone here says that all that the Queen of England does seemingly to remove the Pretender is but a feint, and that the real design is to give him the Crown. Lord Hamilton who was always here with the late King James, and since with the Pretender, said some days ago, that he who would be first in London after the Queen's death would be crowned. If it is the Pretender he will have the Crown undoubtedly ; and if it is the Elector of Hanover, he will have it. But it is easier for the latter to be there than the Pretender, who cannot go but through France, which he is forbid to do, and where he cannot pass but incognito. But it is very certain that they will furnish him here with all the means

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 544.

of going over speedily to England when the event happens." ¹

Against these opinions may be put that of Baron von Steinghens, the London Resident of the Elector Palatine, who scouted the idea that Anne's successor would be the Pretender. "I will assure you, upon my honour," he wrote to Schulenburg on March 27, 1714, "that, after having well calculated and weighed everything which I have been able to make out on one side or the other, after the most exact and impartial researches, I do not see the slightest chance of the Pretender's coming hither, unless affairs were to change their aspect more than, morally speaking, there is any possibility of their doing. I will go further, and say, that if the Queen had died at the time when people were free enough to announce her death, the Princess Sophia would have been proclaimed Queen the self-same day. . . . If I perceived the slightest foundation for believing in a plot in favour of the Pretender, I should be the very first to inform the Elector of it through your channel, so convinced I am of the necessity of the Protestant succession in England for the sake of Germany itself. Every true Englishman, whatever party he may be of, is persuaded of this necessity for the preservation of his own national

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 591.

liberty and prosperity ; he is not less persuaded of this constant truth, that the only enemy which this island has to fear, either for its might or for its commerce, is France. Now, as I know the Premier here is very convinced of these two principles, I have thought hitherto that the indolence which has been shown with regard to the Pretender has been nothing but a bone thrown out for the Whigs and their friends to gnaw, in order to keep them to their duty ; but seeing that the Queen has fired up more than ever in her last speech in favour of the Protestant succession, I am compelled to change my mind, believing that the business of Parliament will be got over much more quietly than would otherwise have been the case, provided that no false steps are taken from abroad. I have often been astonished at the surprising success with which the party adverse to the Court continues to impose upon minds beyond sea for so many years, in spite of the lie which time has so often given to their most positive assertions.”¹

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, pp. 486-487.

CHAPTER XII

THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION. III

THE MATTER OF THE WRIT, 1714

It was not only the Jacobite Lord Hamilton who held the belief that in these uncertain times he who was on the spot when Anne died would be acclaimed sovereign. The Whigs had for years past urged George to send the Electoral Prince to live in London, but the Elector, perhaps mindful of the wording of the preamble to the Duke of Cambridge patent, and certainly better informed by his Minister in London, declined, not through jealousy or on the grounds of expense, as some of his detractors have stated, but because he realised that to do so would result in an open rupture with the Queen. Still the Whigs did not despair, for it was in their belief essential to the success of the cause, and they instructed their hired writers to prepare the minds of the English people for this much-desired move. "We are sensible that the Protestant succession is as firmly secured to us as our Laws can make it," an anonymous pamphleteer (Toland ?), whose *brochure* attracted much attention, summed up his case ; "and besides, that the Peace and the French King's *bonâ fide*, are further Securities. But, notwithstanding this, the

Minds of the People are disquieted ; the Jacobite Faction increases, their Principles are openly Avowed ; Proselytes are daily attempted ; Indefeasible Hereditary Right argued for ; Queries in favour of the Pretender's Right handed about in the Streets ; and several other Steps are taken by that Party to Oppose, as much as possibly they can, the Interest of the House of Hanover, and to Strengthen that of the Pretender. . . . There will be yet a farther Advantage to the Kingdom, by the Residence of that Duke, which is the Bringing-Over of his Princess and Family unto Britain ; the Children Born and Educated amongst Us will quite lose the name of Foreigners ; They'll be nursed and Bred up under our Laws ; and Britain may see a whole Race of her own Country."¹

Now, when everything pointed to a crisis the Whigs again urged this step, not upon George, however, but upon the Electress Sophia who, at last, after consultation with her grandson, the Electoral Prince, yielded to their solicitations. She instructed the Baron von Schütz, the Hanoverian Minister at the Court of St. James's,² to

¹ *Reasons and Necessity of the Duke of Cambridge Coming to, and Residing in Britain*, pp. 4, 11-12.

² Freiherr von Schütz was a son of the Hanoverian Envoy accredited to the Court of St. James's in the reign of William III. He was a nephew of Bernstorff, and was well acquainted with the English language, customs, and manners. See Onno Klopp: *Der Fall des Hauses Stuart*, Vol. XIV, p. 491.

apply for a writ summoning the Electoral Prince as Duke of Cambridge to take his seat in the English House of Lords. Schütz had no choice but to obey, for the credentials of the Hanoverian Ministers were made out in the joint names of Sophia and George Lewis ;¹ and he carried out his instructions forthwith by applying on April 12 to Lord Chancellor Harcourt, who, embarrassed by the demand, said he could make no reply until the following day, as he must refer the matter to the Queen.

Really the residence of the Electoral Prince in England was a most desirable move, since it would have a most tranquillising effect upon the nation, and, Marlborough thought, "The Prince being but third in the order of succession, and coming alone without troops, the Queen cannot be justly offended."² The idea was not new to Anne, but she had always ignored it, either because she

¹ "Je dois y ajouter en confidence, que ce fut Madame l'Electrice, qui, de sa seule tests, et sans en parler ni à Monseigneur l'Electeur, ni à aucun de ses ministres, écrivit au Baron de Schütz de demander le 'writ' pour le Prince Electoral ; à quoi M. de Schütz ne put pas se dispenser d'obeir, estant envoyé de Madame l'Electrice tout de mesne que de Monseigneur l'Electeur, et ayant d'elle des lettres de créance, et des instructions."

—Robethon to Alexander, Viscount Polworth, Hanover, June 22 (N.S.), 1714. *Marchmont Papers*, Vol. II, Appendix.

² Marlborough to Robethon, May 5, 1714 (Macpherson: *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 607).

thought if it was carried out it would be detrimental to her brother's hopes of the succession, or because she had that feeling which prevents weak-minded people from making a will. The very suggestion, said the Lord Treasurer, would be to place a coffin before her Majesty's eyes. Now that Schütz's demand was formally put before her, her rage was ungovernable.¹ A Cabinet Council was called, and the letter to the Hanoverian Minister drafted. The writ of summons could not be refused, indeed, but she declared that nothing would induce her to permit the Duke of Cambridge, or any other member of the Electoral family, to come to England; and she sent one of her

¹ Tom D'Urfey was acute enough to take advantage of Anne's anger, and he penned an impromptu doggerel poem at her Majesty's side-board during the progress of the three-o'clock dinner, for which the delighted Queen presented him with fifty pounds. One of the verses has been preserved—

" The Crown's far too weighty
For shoulders of eighty ;
She could not sustain such a trophy.
Her hand, too, already
Has grown so unsteady,
She can't hold a sceptre ;—
So Providence kept her
Away, poor dowager Sophy ! "

D'Urfey's attack on the Hanoverian family did not prevent him later from writing " An Oration, addressed to the King, the Prince and Princess." See *Poems on General Occasions*, Vol. I, p. 339.

Household to Schütz to inform him that she regarded his conduct as a personal affront, that he would never again be received at her Court, that she would at once request the Electress Sophia and the Elector forthwith to recall him, and, further, that she did not believe that he had had instructions to apply for the writ.¹

The next morning Schütz wrote to Harcourt for the reply to his demand, and received the following letter—

" *April 13th, O.S., 1714.*

" Sir,

" When you came to me yesterday, and told me that, by orders of the Princess Sophia, you demanded a writ of summons for the Duke of Cambridge, I let you know that I thought it my duty to acquaint her Majesty therewith.

" I have accordingly laid this matter before the Queen, who was pleased to say that, not having received the least information of this demand from you, or in any other manner whatsoever from the Court of Hanover, she could hardly persuade herself that you acted by direction from thence ; that she, therefore, did not think fit to give me any other answer than this.

" The writ for the Duke of Cambridge was sealed,

¹ Macpherson: *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, pp. 640-641.

of course, when the writs of summons to all the other peers were sealed, and lies ready to be delivered to you, whenever you call for it.

“ I am, Sir,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ HARCOURT, C.”¹

Anne then wrote letters to Sophia and to the Electoral Prince, which the Duchess of Marlborough (to whom the Electress sent a copy) called “ very extraordinary,” and which were at once printed for partisan purposes ; and a third letter, which was not published for sixty years, to George Lewis, was, Boyer thought, “ written in a style so unbecoming the one and the other.”²

“ Madam, Sister, Aunt,

“ Since the right of succession to my Kingdoms has been declared to belong to you and your family, there have always been disaffected persons, who, by particular views of their own interest, have entered into measures to fix a Prince of your Blood in my dominions, even whilst I am yet living. I never thought till now that this project would have gone so far, as to have made the least impression on your mind. But, as I have lately

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 591.

² Boyer : *Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 700.

perceived, by public rumours which are industriously spread, that your Electoral Highness is come into this sentiment ; it is of importance, with respect to the succession of your family, that I should tell you, such a proceeding will infallibly draw along with it some consequences, that will be *dangerous to that succession itself* ; which is not secure any other ways, than as the Prince, who actually wears the Crown, maintains her authority and prerogative. There are here (such is our misfortune) a great many people that are seditiously disposed : so I leave you to judge what tumults they may be able to raise, if they should have a pretext to begin a commotion. I persuade myself, therefore, you will never consent that the least thing should be done, that may disturb the repose of me, or my subjects.

“ Open yourself to me with the same freedom I do to you, and propose whatever you think may contribute to the security of the succession ; I will come into it with zeal, *provided* that it do not *derogate* from my dignity, which I am resolved to maintain.

“ I am, with a great deal of affection, etc.,

“ ANNE R.¹

“ *St. James's, May 19th, 1714.*”

¹ Boyer : *Reign of Queen Anne*, pp. 699-700.

It has been said that the receipt of this letter accelerated the death of the Electress, but there is no ground for this statement. That she was annoyed by it goes without saying, but that she was quite well in health after its receipt is proved by a letter from the Electoral Prince to Leibnitz, and by a statement by the Raugräfin Louise, her niece, that Sophia was quite well two days before her death.¹ She was now in her eighty-fourth year, and in the previous November had suffered from erysipelas and her great age prevented her regaining full strength. On June 8 she was walking in the gardens behind the Orangery House at Herrenhausen, when it came on to rain, and she hastened to reach shelter. "You are walking too quickly," said her attendant. "I believe I am," she answered, and dropped to the ground. She never spoke again, and died in a few hours. She was buried in the chapel of the Palace at Hanover.

It has been said that had Anne died before Sophia, the latter, taking her age into consideration, would have resigned her claim to the English throne in favour of her son,² but there is no ground for this statement. The same writer says, truly enough, that as it was evident she could not live

¹ Leibnitz: *Correspondence*; Kemble: *State Papers*, p. 48, etc.

² Macpherson: *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 647.

many years, not she, but George Lewis was the object of attention of the Hanoverian party in England ; but he adds that the Elector, without consulting her, instructed envoys in her name, and that, therefore, " her death could produce no change in the present state of affairs." The error of the last statements has already been exposed, for the envoys were sent in the joint names of Sophia and her son, and in the matter of the writ she, and not the Elector, instructed the Hanoverian Resident in London. This, however, was not generally known at the time to English writers, and so we find Macpherson¹ and other contemporary historians stating that in this matter George Lewis yielded to the earnest persuasions of the Whigs.

It is, perhaps, worthy of mention that Roger Acherley, lawyer and pamphleteer,² was probably the first person to advise that the writ should be demanded at this particular time ; and in a letter to Leibnitz, dated August 13, 1714, asking for the fulfilment of promises of payment and advancement due for his services, he claimed that " as the result of that move [as advised by him] there had happened this happy state of affairs : It raised

¹ Macpherson : *History of Great Britain*, pp. 639 and 647.

² Roger Acherley, (1665 (?) - 1740), author of *The Britannic Constitution*, 1727.

a mighty ferment in the people and discovered their warm inclination to have the Duke amongst them, as the only means to remove their fears. It created such a jealousy amongst the ministers that each suspected the other to have deserted him, as if he had made private applications for himself to his Electoral Highness, and each accused and belied the other to the Queen, as the adviser and contriver of the demand, and that embarrassed both her and themselves. It raised an excessive fear and jealousy and suspicion in the Queen, lest she should be abandoned and forsaken, and that joined to her ill-health of body, collaterally accelerated her end and death.”¹ Two months later he reiterated his claim to consideration on the ground that the Queen’s death has been, more or less directly, the result of following his advice. “The outcome,” he wrote to Leibnitz on October 12, “raised such a commotion at Court, that the Queen was vexed and frightened, and that put a stop to her gouty humours, that were at that time beginning to disperse into her hands and feet, and turned them up into her head, and killed her as effectually and almost as suddenly as if she had been shot with a pistol. Upon this a glorious scene opened; for whereas my design reached no further than to introduce the Duke of Cambridge,

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, pp. 519-520.

in order by ordinary means to secure the Elector's peaceable accession to the Crown in some remote distance of time, Providence turned the demand of a writ a better way, and ordered it so, that instead of introducing the Duke of Cambridge, it has been the means of his Majesty's speedy, sudden, and unexpected ascending the throne of a rich, powerful, and glorious kingdom."¹ It is with satisfaction that we learn that Acherley was never, according to his own ideas, adequately rewarded.

Queen Anne, ignorant that George Lewis had not given instructions to demand the writ, wrote to him²—

"As the rumour increases that my cousin, the Electoral Prince, has resolved to come over to settle, in my lifetime, in my dominions, I do not

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 527.

² "In this determined conduct, that timid Princess seems to have been chiefly supported by her own fears. She found that the attachment of her subjects to her person declined with the state of her health. That, though she had many servants, she was totally destitute of friends. That those whom she trusted the most were the least likely to adhere to her cause. That a minister who derived a claim to her favour from his pretending to support his measures, was making terms for himself or her political enemies. That her authority, and even her very title, as sovereign, would depend upon the moderation of her successes ; and that she would be either forced to resign her crown, or to exert its prerogatives in subservience to a party whom she both hated and feared."—Macpherson : *History of Great Britain*, Vol. II, p. 642.

choose to delay a moment to write to you about this, and to communicate to you my sentiments, upon a subject of this importance.

“ I then freely own to you that I cannot imagine, that a Prince who possesses the knowledge and penetration of your Electoral Highness, can ever contribute to such an attempt ; and that I believe you are too just to allow that any infringement shall be made on my sovereignty which you would not choose should be made on your own. I am firmly persuaded that you would not suffer the smallest diminution of your authority ; I am no less delicate in that respect ; and I am determined to oppose a project so contrary to my royal authority, however fatal the consequences may be.

“ Your Electoral Highness is too just to refuse to bear me witness that I gave, on all occasions, proofs of my desire that your family should succeed to my Crowns ; which I always recommend to my people, as the most solid support of their religion and their laws. I employ all my attentions, that nothing should efface these impressions from the hearts of my subjects ; but it is not possible to derogate from the dignity and prerogatives of the Prince who wears the crown, without making a dangerous breach on the rights of the successors ; therefore, I doubt not, but with your usual wisdom, you will prevent the taking such a step ; and that you will

give me an opportunity of renewing to you assurances of the most sincere friendship with which

“ I am, etc.,
“ ANNE R.”¹

To this letter George made reply, after a delay caused by his mother's death—

“ *Hanover, June 15th, 1714.*

“ Madam,

“ I received the letter with which your Majesty honoured me, of the 30th of the last month, the contents of which both surprised and gave me uneasiness. I had flattered myself I had given your Majesty the most convincing proofs of my respect for your royal person, and of my gratitude for your kindness. Your Majesty cannot be ignorant, that I always relied with the utmost confidence upon the wisdom of your Government, without taking the smallest concern in factions (far from being capable of encouraging them), and that I always wished your authority and your royal prerogatives might be maintained in all their lustre ; no one after your Majesty having more interest therein than I and my family.

“ It is so essential to me to cultivate the honour of your good graces, that it is natural to imagine

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 621.

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the presence of one of the princes of my family in your kingdoms, could never have any other desire than to confirm a good understanding between the two Courts, and to render to your Majesty all possible services. If your Majesty will be so good as to take the trouble of looking to the memorial which I ordered to be delivered to Mr. Harley, you will see there with what sincerity I desire to concert with your Majesty whatever may be further necessary to confirm the succession established by the laws. I entreat your Majesty to pay to it the attention which such important interests deserve, and to be persuaded that nothing shall ever be capable of altering the respect with which

“ I am, etc.,

“ GEORGE LEWIS.” ¹

The memorial, to which reference is made in the Elector's reply to the Queen, had been delivered to Thomas Harley, a kinsman of his more celebrated namesake, who had been sent to Hanover, ostensibly to put matters on a more satisfactory footing, and actually, probably, to endeavour to blind George Lewis to the machinations of the Tories in favour of the Pretender—a ruse, any chance of the success of which was quickly

¹ Macpherson : *Original Papers*, Vol. II, p. 624.

dissipated by Marlborough, who sent his political agent, Molyneux, to warn the Hanoverian ministers of the real object of the envoy's visit. The memorial, signed by the Electress and by George Lewis, was delivered to Thomas Harley on May 7 and desired the Pretender's removal from Lorraine, a pension for the Princess Sophia (or in the event of her death, the heir to the throne), leave to send a Prince of the Electoral family to reside in England, and titles as Princes of the Blood to such of the Protestant Princes of the family as had none. Writing on June 22, Robethon says that so far no reply had been sent to these requests, but he understands that Lord Clarendon was bringing an answer.¹

Schütz, being forbidden the Court by Queen Anne, had returned to Hanover, bringing with him the writ of summons for the Electoral Prince; and the matter now to be decided by George Lewis was whether or no he should send his son to England. Strafford wrote from London advising the Elector to disavow the proceedings,² and indeed the two Courts were so agitated that it was essential that no hasty step, except one of pacification, should be taken. "*Il ne faut donc*

¹ Robethon to Alexander, Viscount Polworth, June 22 (N.S.), 1714. *Marchmont Papers*, Vol. II, Appendix.

² *Wentworth Papers*, p. 31.

pas s'étonner, Mylord, que cette démarche de demander le ' writ ' s'estant faite à l'insçu de Monseigneur l'Electeur, il n'ait pas pu se résoudre d'abord à envoyer le Prince en Angleterre," Robethon wrote to Lord Polworth on June 22 (N.S.), 1714. *" Il en auroit pourtant pris la résolution à la fin, si les lettres menaçante de la Reyne, et la mort de Madame l'Electrice n'estoient survenues, ce qui a changé tout le système ; de sorte qu'on ne pourra songer au voyage du Prince que vers la session prochaine. En attendant, son Altesse Electorale envoie Monsieur le Baron de Bothmer résider en Angleterre, ce qui sera fort agréable aux amis, que nous y avons, et fort capable de les encourager."*¹

George, convinced of the wisdom of this course, disavowed Schütz, and, to the great indignation of the Whigs and of several of his Hanoverian ministers, declined to permit his son to go to England, except with the consent of the Queen. He was, indeed, well advised in this matter, if any reliance can be placed in the intelligence of Baron von Steinghens. " I can assure you," von Steinghens wrote to Schulenburg on June 5, 1714, " in spite of the fine promises of the Whigs, that the parliament would never have voted one *sou* for the subsistence of this Prince if he had come against the will of the Queen, and I can tell

¹ *Marchmont Papers*, Vol. II, Appendix.

you still more, that I have learnt from people of the first order, that if the Prince had come to this Kingdom in that way, the Pretender would not have failed to follow him immediately, and that he would have found here all the dispositions which the spite and rage of an insulted Court and party could inspire ; so much horror people have of falling again under the domination of the Whigs, the hatred of whom can be compared to nothing better than that of the Catholic Netherlands against the Dutch, either for atrocity or for extent ; for I am well assured that there are more than thirty Tories for one Whig in this kingdom.”¹ The information in this letter was conveyed by Schulenburg to Leibnitz, who, in turn, probably imparted it to the Elector. In the face of it, to send the Electoral Prince to England would have been to risk the succession without any compensating advantage.

“ If I had the Hanoverian Succession in these kingdoms less at heart, I would have spared you the trouble of reading this, and the annoyance of learning things which are incompatible with our views, at any rate until my return to town,” Steinghens wrote reproachfully to Schulenburg from Bath, July 24. “ Do not look for any order in my discourse, my heart is too full ; and

¹ Kemble : *State Papers*, p. 502.

I cannot refrain from telling you that, at the very moment when we are working ourselves to death at everything (except indeed consenting to the coming of the Prince, because absolutely this is as yet out of season) to oblige and reassure the House and Court of Hanover, this House seems to forget nothing which may chagrin and shock the Court of England, at the same time that it raises an alarm about the Pretender. I am not going to speak about the Elector's choice of M. de Bothmer, seeing that I have this moment myself been excusing it, on the ground that, as this Minister was the most within reach to pass into England, his E.H. thought it best to prefer him to anyone else, in order not to delay the duty of the notification. What I allude to, is *the communication of copies of letters which the Queen and her Prime Minister wrote in the deepest confidence to the late Electress and to the Electoral Prince, which letters are seen and cried about the streets in print, to the great scandal and in despite of the Court, and all those who are well-affectioned to the Hanoverian Succession, of whom there are a great number among the Tories.*"¹

Indeed, in spite of the fact that on the Queen's birthday (February 6) the London mob had shown its temper by burning effigies of the

¹ Kemble: *State Papers*, p. 515.

Pretender, the Devil, and the Pope, it was not a time to take any risk that could possibly be avoided, for in the matter of the succession, things, from the Hanoverian point of view, were going from bad to worse. As Lord Treasurer Oxford declined in favour, so Bolingbroke's influence with the Queen became paramount, and Lord Chesterfield was convinced that had Anne¹ lived three months longer, the Hanoverian succession would have been in imminent danger.

¹ "The Queen had high notions of hereditary right, and, therefore, in her private way of thinking, could not forbear wishing the succession might be continued, in what she deemed the legitimate branch of her father's family. Indefeasible and slavish notions in support of this right were avowed in numerous Addresses. The King, when Prince of Hanover, had been seen hither with proposals of marriage, the proof he then gave of a personal dislike are justly supposed to have produced lasting hatred and resentment.

"All proper preparations were made for the execution of purposes well understood, though not expressly avowed. The ministers and all who had been the sure and certain supports of the Hanover succession had been disgraced. Many favourable concessions were made to our often defeated enemies, the friends and protectors of the Pretender, both by interest and inclination. The administration of affairs was committed to the most daring and determined; and the nation deluded into madness for destruction. But while our hearts were failing for fear of what was coming, the Queen's sudden and unexpected death gave this worthy and amiable Prince an easy and unmolested accession to ye throne." An unpublished letter from the Rev. H. Etough to Dr. Birch, April 2, 1746 (MS. in British Museum).

It was an open secret that the Tories believed that if they could hold office until the Queen's death, they might safely proclaim the Pretender. "Were it certain, as was believed," wrote Horace Walpole subsequently, "that Bolingbroke and the Jacobites prevailed on the Queen to consent to her brother [the Old Pretender] coming secretly to England, and to seeing him in her closet; she might have been induced to that step, when provoked by an attempt to force a distant foreign heir upon her while still alive."¹

Even as matters stood at the beginning of July, Bolingbroke declared that if George Lewis ever ascended the throne, the Pretender would have only himself to blame. On the other hand, it is said that the Queen, desirous to abdicate in favour of her brother, asked Bishop Wilkins, called "The Prophet," what would be the consequences of such

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cxiii.

"What the consequences might have been, if the Queen had survived is merely a matter of conjecture; but we may pronounce, with some degree of assurance, that the Protestant succession would have been exposed to more certain and to more imminent dangers than ever had threatened it before at any period since the Revolution."—Somerville: *History of Great Britain during the Reign of Queen Anne*. Somerville adds that, had she lived longer, she would have had to declare either for George Lewis or James III, and that she would have been compelled to consent to receive at her Court a representative of the Prince upon whom her choice fell.

a step. "Madam," he replied, "you would be in the Tower in a month, and dead in three." This, according to the narrator, which was merely an opinion, was taken as inspiration by the Queen, who forthwith abandoned all idea of this act of renunciation.¹

At the Prorogation of Parliament on July 9, Anne again omitted the customary reference to the Protestant succession; and on July 27 Oxford, though allowed to retain his other offices, was deprived of the Lord Treasurer's white staff. The latter Bolingbroke felt sure would be bestowed upon him, but his hopes were to be disappointed. Immediately after Oxford's dismissal, a Council met at Whitehall under the presidency of Anne to discuss the formation of a commission for the Treasury. Bolingbroke had intended that Wyndham should be First Lord of the Treasury, but this and his other projects were opposed by a party who desired that Lord Shrewsbury should have the white staff. Notwithstanding the presence of the Queen, there was much acrimonious discussion, and at two o'clock in the morning Anne, declaring she would never survive the scene, adjourned the meeting until the evening.

The health of the Queen had long been far from

¹ *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cxiii.

good, and the worry and agitation of the last few months had made it worse. Later in the day of July 28 she was so unwell that she postponed the meeting of the Council until the following evening, when, however, she was still too ill to attend. On the 30th the Duchess of Ormond, who was in waiting, sent word to her husband and Lord Shrewsbury in the Council Room that the Queen was dying. The Council then repaired to Kensington, where the Queen lay, and there, unsummoned, but claiming the right of entry as Privy Councillors and pleading in excuse for their appearance the greatness of the emergency, came the Whig Dukes of Somerset and Argyll, who were welcomed by Shrewsbury, at whose instigation probably they had attended.

Then Bolingbroke, who seems to have lost his nerve, proposed that Shrewsbury should be Lord Treasurer, and in the Privy Council Register for July 30 is the entry, "Their Lordships met in the Council Chamber, and, considering the present exigency of affairs, were unanimously of an opinion to move the Queen that she would constitute the Duke of Shrewsbury Lord Treasurer." A deputation waited on the Queen to inform her of this decision, and with a flash of royal dignity she handed the white staff to Shrewsbury with the words, "Use it for the good of my country." The

Council, which on July 31 was increased from twenty-five to thirty-eight by the arrival of the Whig Lords, sat throughout the day, under the presidency of Shrewsbury, to draw up schemes for securing the succession. On the following morning, Sunday, August 1, at 7.30, Queen Anne died.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE I

DURING the last few years the eyes of England and, indeed, of Europe had been turned to Hanover, which town, according to the Duchess of Orleans, had since 1710 " become a little England, because it is filled with Englishmen." Lord Clarendon arrived at Hanover on July 26, 1714, the bearer of Bolingbroke's reply in Anne's name to the Memorial of May 7 signed by Sophia and George Lewis, though he did not have his audience until August 4, as the Elector had as his guest the King of Prussia, whose support he was enlisting in favour of his claim to the English throne. On August 5 came James Craggs, junior, with a letter from the Privy Council, dated July 31, announcing Anne's precarious state of health, and conveying assurances that in the event of her demise every precaution would be taken to safeguard the Hanoverian succession.¹

The same night three messengers from England arrived, two to the Court and one to Lord Clarendon, with the news of the death of Queen Anne. The English Ambassador had been supping with the Elector at the Baroness von Kielmansegg's, and he

¹ *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, p. 206.

received the despatch on his return to his apartments ; whereupon, so the story runs, he at once went to Herrenhausen, forced his way into the Elector's bedroom, awakened him, and saluted him as King of England. Malortie is responsible for this version of how George received the news, which he relates with a mass of corroborative detail,¹ but a more recent German historian, Onno Klopp, throws doubt on it, and suggests that tradition may have confused Dorset for Clarendon.² But while Malortie may be right, Klopp is almost certainly wrong, for the Earl of Dorset, who was sent over by the Lord Justices to make the formal announcement of the succession and to attend the King on his journey to England, did not arrive until the evening of August 8, and did not have his audience until the following day. As the news reached Hanover on the night of the 6th, George Lewis must have heard of it before Lord Dorset's arrival, and if Lord Clarendon did not wake him up to tell him, he must have been informed on the morning of the 7th, probably by Gödeke, Bothmer's secretary, sent over unofficially by his master.

" It is certain that George is so very indifferent

¹ *Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*, Vol. I, p. 56.

² *Fall des Hauses Stuart*, Vol. XIV, p. 646.

to the succession, that when it comes to the hour he will be in doubt as to whether to give up his state where he amuses himself with *bagatelles*, to take up the greater position,"¹ Marshal von der Schulenburg wrote to Steinghens a few days before the news of Queen Anne's death reached him. The Marshal was probably right in so far that George would not have been deeply grieved had the Crown been wrested from him even at the eleventh hour, and Dean Lockier was "fully persuaded that George would never have stirred a foot if there had been any strong opposition." On the other hand, though there were many who thought with him, the Marshal was wrong in his belief that the Elector was ever in doubt as to his course when the English Crown fell to his lot. "Many people were pleased to say that the Elector hesitated whether he should accept of the august dignity," Pöllnitz noted in his *Memoirs*, "but for my part I fancy that the voyage to England was more the subject of the Council's deliberation, than the question whether the Crown should be accepted." The question of declining the Crown never arose then or at any other time, nor, as it has been shown, did George entertain any idea of passing it over to his son. The Elector was

¹ Vehse: *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig* Vol. I, p. 185.

far too deeply bound by pledges to throw over the party that had worked so hard to secure the Hanoverian succession, and if no other motive impelled him to accept, he was bound by the royal maxim, *noblesse oblige*.

But though George never tried to evade his obligations, he was far from happy at having to fulfil them ; and perhaps the most unhappy day of his life was that on which he learned he was King of England. Never was prince more sad at such promotion ! and one may justly feel some sympathy with a man of fifty-four compelled to change all the circumstances of his life. " He was born with all the attributes of the country gentleman, but he is devoid of those of a monarch,"¹ Marshal von der Schulenburg declared ; and certainly any ambitions he may have cherished in his youth had been destroyed by his love of ease, to which for years past he had entirely surrendered himself.

He was content with his rank as a sovereign prince of the Empire, he was devoted to his country, where he was extremely popular with his subjects, and he would have given much to have been allowed to spend the rest of his life at Herrenhausen, where he was surrounded by familiar

¹ Vehse : *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 185.

faces, instead of in the fierce light that beat upon St. James's, where he would be a stranger. He hated the parade of royalty, and never appeared in state whenever it was possible to avoid doing so, and so pronounced was his objection that the Duchess of Orleans pertinently asked, "What will the King do in England, since he hates ceremonial, for from that a King cannot escape?"

He had to go from a country where he was absolute, to another where so far from being supreme, when King and people differed on a matter of vital importance, the monarch had to give way—the price of resistance having been fixed, at worst at death, at best exile or civil war. He had to go from a country where he was the wealthiest and most important personage¹ to another where he would be merely regarded as a minor German princeling set up as a figurehead, and where many of the gentry were wealthier than

¹ "I have now made the tour of Germany, and cannot help observing a considerable difference between travelling here and in England. One sees none of those fine seats of noblemen that are so common among us, nor anything like a country gentleman's house. . . . But the whole people are divided into absolute sovereignties, where all the riches and magnificence are at Court; or communities of merchants, such as Nuremburg, and Frankfort, where they live always in town for the convenience of trade."—Lady M. W. Montagu to Countess of Bristol, Hanover, November 25, 1716. (*Letters*, ed. Thomas, Vol. I, p. 136).



Le Gouvernement de la Nouvelle France. Roy de la Grande Bretagne.



Le Gouvernement de la Nouvelle France. Roy de la Grande Bretagne.

From an old print in the British Museum

THE CORONATION OF GEORGE I

he. Worse than all, he must set forth, by no means sure of his reception, and with no love, nor even liking, for the people over whom he was called to reign. That he did go at all is greatly to his credit, for he was doubtful if he would be allowed to remain, and he never revisited Hanover without some suspicion that he might not be able to return to England. He would have been a much happier man if he could have remained at his beloved Herrenhausen. He never felt he owed Britain anything, and indeed he did not : the throne had been settled on his mother not for love of her, but simply because she was the only alternative to the succession of the dreaded Roman Catholic heirs. So George came as a visitor, rather submitting to be King of England, than anxious for the honour, prepared to be forced by circumstances to return, little dreaming that two hundred years later his descendants would be firmly seated upon his throne.

There were murmurings in England as the weeks passed, and George still remained in Hanover, and many reasons were advanced to account for the delay. A theory that had some supporters was that George would not come at all, and many believed he was anxious to put off his departure as long as possible ; while Coxe thought his prolonged stay should be ascribed to profound policy, which dictated that it would be prudent before

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undertaking the journey to await definite and reliable information as to the temper of the English people concerning the succession.¹

All this, however, was mere guesswork, arising from the fact that in England George was regarded as a minor German princeling, who could have nothing whatever to keep him at home. That this view was a mistake is now recognised, for, notwithstanding the limited extent of his territories of Hanover-Celle, he was a very pillar of the Empire. It follows, then, that so far from having little to do, before leaving his dominions for an indefinite period there were many arrangements concerning domestic affairs and external policy to settle—and the time that George stayed in Hanover was not too long for this business, especially when it is remembered that the King-Elector, a deliberate and phlegmatic man, was not a quick worker. Even apart from the question of home and foreign policy, the innumerable official and semi-official visitors to Hanover furnishes another reason for the delay in setting out; thither, upon the news of the Queen's death, came Breton,

¹ Coxe: *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, Vol. I, p. 60.

This view was also taken by Charles Bradlaugh (*The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick*, p. 10): "Being apparently rather doubtful as to the reception he would meet with in this country, George delayed visiting his new dominion until the month of October."



From a portrait engraved by Simon in the British Museum

ERNEST AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF YORK AND ALBANY

the English ambassador at Berlin, and the Earl of Albemarle from Holland, besides princes and envoys from all quarters of Europe, bearing messages of congratulation to George upon his accession.

At last a start was made. The exodus began. Lord Albemarle, having invited the King to take his house at Voorst on his way to Holland, was the first to depart, to prepare for his Majesty's visit ; on August 19 Lord Clarendon set out for The Hague, and on the next day Breton returned to Berlin. Two days later Lord Dorset started for The Hague, and on August 29 departed a portion of the royal suite there to await their master, headed by Baron von Kielmansegg, Master of the Horse, Baron von Bernstorff, Prime Minister, Baron von Schlitz-Görtz, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Robethon, Privy Councillor.

The King deputed the Government of Hanover to a Council of Regency, at the head of which he placed his youngest brother, Ernest Augustus ;¹ he decided to take with him the Electoral Prince (soon to be Prince of Wales), and arranged that the Princess with her two eldest daughters should follow a few weeks after, while Prince Frederick

¹ Ernest Augustus (1674-1728) visited England in June 1716, when he was created Duke of York and Albany, and invested with the order of the Garter. Earlier in that year the title and emoluments of the bishopric of Osnabrück had been conferred upon him.

(in his turn Prince of Wales), the eldest son of the Electoral Prince and Princess, should remain at Hanover with his youngest sister. Besides the four important officials mentioned above, the King selected to accompany him, Count von Platen, Great Chamberlain, Baron von Rhede, Herr von Bernstorff, and the Marquis de la Forêt, Chamberlains ; Baron von Schütz and his two brothers (one of the latter, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to his Majesty, the other serving the Prince in the same capacity), Herr Reiche, Secretary ; Baron von Hattorf, Counsellor of War ; Herr Schraden, Secretary of Embassy ; Herr Hammerstein, Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber ; and Herr Kempe, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the Prince.

Sadly George took his leave of the place that had so long been his home, "*Adieu ! Du lieber Ort, wo ich so viele vergnügte ruhige Stunden gehabt. Ich gehe von Dir, wiewohl nicht auf ewig, sondern Ich hoffe, dich auch bisweilen wieder zu sehen.*" ("Adieu, dear town, where I have spent so many happy and tranquil hours ; but I do not say Farewell, for I hope from time to time to return ! ")¹ Desirous to make a parting gift to the state, he invited the magistrates to ask some favour from him, and, at

¹ Malortie : *Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*, Vol. I, p. 57.

their request, took the excise off provisions and released the insolvent debtors from prison. The concluding scene of this particular epoch is that of George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, on the last day of August, 1714, going forth grim, taciturn, and unhappy, on the way to London, there to place upon his brow the crown of his ancestors.

George had insisted on leaving Hanover without ceremony, content with the cries of his subjects assembled to wish him God-speed ; but at The Hague, where he arrived on September 5, he was compelled to endure magnificent entertainments given in his honour. On September 16 he embarked at Orange Polder in the royal yacht *Pelegrine*, and, escorted by the English fleet, of twenty-two men of war, four frigates, etc., which had been off the coast of Holland since August 29, he set sail for his new kingdom. In the words of the poetaster, Samuel Croxall¹—

“ Her anchors weighing, and unfurl'd her Sails,
His Navy next conducts the God-like King,
Opens her bosom to the Eastern Gales,
And with full Joy distends her Canvas Wing :
Blow soft, ye Gales : yet quick, O quickly bring
The precious Life committed to your Care ;
Your sweetest Airs, ye gentle *Naiads* sing
While finny *Tritons* on their Shoulders bear
Britannia's Fleet, a moving Magazine of War.”

¹ *An Ode . . . to the King occasioned by His Majesty's Most auspicious Succession and Arrival*, pp. 6-7.

With equal joy Mr. Laurence Eusden, hereafter to be the Poet Laureate, put forth rhymes to celebrate the occasion—

“ Hail, mighty GEORGE ! auspicious smiles thy Reign,
Thee long we wish'd, Thee at last we gain.
Thy hoary Prudence in green Years began,
And the bold Infant stretch'd at once to Man.
How oft, Transported, the great *Ernest* smil'd
With the Presages of his greater Child.

O happy *Britain* ! blest with her Desires,
Blest with a Monarch, whom the World admires !
O happy Monarch ! who his Subjects sees
Inclin'd by Choice, and not Constrain, to please !
In vain the proud Triumphal Arches rise
On lofty Columns, till they mate the Skies ;
Not him the proud Triumphal Arches move,
His noblest Triumph is his People's Love.”¹

But if there was senseless laudation at this time, there was written also cruel epigram—and it must be confessed that the latter makes more interesting reading.

“ When Israel first provok'd the living Lord,
He punished them with famine, plague and sword,
Still they sinn'd on. He in His wrath did fling
No thunderbolt among them—but a king,
A George-like King, was Heaven's severest rod,
The utmost vengeance of an angry God.
God in His wrath sent Saul to punish Jewry,
And George to England in a greater fury ;
For George in sin as far exceeded Saul
As ever Bishop Burnet did St. Paul.”

¹ *A Letter to Mr. Addison on the King's Accession to the Throne*, pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND OF GEORGE I

IMMEDIATELY upon receiving the tidings of the death of Queen Anne, the Council, which was at the moment assembled at Kensington, adjourned to St. James's. By the Regency Bill the administration of the government in the event of the absence of the King at the time of his ascension devolved upon the holders for the time being of certain Great Offices of State, viz. : the Archbishop of Canterbury (Thomas Tenison), the Lord Chancellor (Simon, Lord Harcourt), Lord President (John, Duke of Buckingham), the Lord High Treasurer (Charles, Duke of Shrewsbury), the Lord Privy Seal (William, Earl of Dartmouth), the First Lord of the Admiralty (Thomas, Earl of Strafford), and the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench (Sir Thomas Parker). Under another clause of the Act a number of Lords Justices were to be chosen by the successor to the throne ; and now Baron von Bothmer, the Hanoverian Envoy-Extraordinary to the Court of St. James's, opened the sealed packet containing the Commission of Regency, drawn up by George after the

death of his mother. The King's nominees were the Archbishop of York, the Dukes of Shrewsbury,¹ Somerset, Bolton, Devonshire, Kent, Argyll, Montrose, Roxborough ; the Earls of Pembroke, Anglesea, Carlisle, Nottingham, Abingdon, Scarborough, and Oxford ; Viscount Townshend, and Barons Halifax and Cowper. The most noticeable omissions from the list were Somers and Marlborough. Somers' name was not inserted because of his ill-health, which prevented his attendance at the Council meetings ; but opinions were divided as to the exclusion of the Duke : some said it was because he was not in England, others that the King placed no trust in him, while there were those who thought that George bore him a grudge since the campaign of 1708, when Marlborough did not communicate his plan of operations to the Elector ; but the question was set at rest when it became known that probably the first document signed by George as Sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland, dated August 6, was that appointing Marlborough Captain-General of the Forces. Immediately after Anne's death Marlborough returned to England from what a contemporary writer

¹ Of course the Commission was made out before the Duke of Shrewsbury was given the White Staff, the possession of which made him a Lord Justice as one of the Great Officers of State.

happily called his "voluntary but prudent exile."¹

The first act of the Council was to sanction the issue of the proclamation, which, of course, had been already prepared—

"Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God to call to His Mercy our Late Sovereign Lady Queen Anne, of Blessed Memory, by whose decease the Imperial Crowns of Great Britain, France, and Ireland are solely and rightfully come to the High and Mighty Prince George, Elector of Brunswick-Lüneburg: We therefore the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the Realm, being here assisted with those of Her Late Majesty's Council, with numbers of other principal Gentlemen of Quality, with the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of London, do hereby now, with one full Voice and Consent of Tongue and Heart publish and proclaim That the High and Mighty Prince George, Elector of Brunswick-Lüneburg, is now, by the Death of our Late Sovereign, of Happy Memory, become our only lawful and rightful Liege Lord, George, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. To whom we do acknowledge all Faith and constant Obedience, with all hearty and humble Affection: Beseeching God, by whom Kings and Queens do

¹ *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, p. 140.

reign, to bless the Royal King George with Long and Happy Years to reign over us.

“ Given at the Palace of St. James’s, the First Day of August, 1714.

“ GOD SAVE THE KING.”

The heralds read the Proclamation in all the principal cities of the kingdom, and, to the general surprise, nowhere was there any important rising. It may have been that the people were truly glad to have the matter of the succession settled ; and, indeed, the death of the Queen was so generally accepted as making for a more tranquil state of affairs, that on July 30 a rumour of her demise sent consuls up three per cent. “ *La tranquillité qu’on voit icy sans aucune apparence qu’il y ait le moindre mouvement en faveur du Chevalier,*” Iberville wrote to the King of France on August 13, “ *a fait hausser de sept à huit pour cent les actions sur les fonds publics.*”¹ Perhaps there might have been more disturbance had it not been well known that every precaution had been taken to preserve peace ; troops were everywhere in readiness, in Ireland Papists were disarmed and

¹ Iberville, however, had thought his house might be attacked, and, so soon as he heard of the death of Queen Anne, had asked the Duke of Ormonde for a guard which was, of course, supplied.

their horses seized, Whig generals had been sent to Scotland, where disaffection was most likely to be shown, and the Fleet was distributed so as to protect the country from invasion.

It is true that Atterbury urged Bolingbroke to proclaim the Pretender as James III at Charing Cross, and offered to head the procession in his lawn sleeves ; but any chance there had been to secure the throne for the Pretender was temporarily dissipated by the unreadiness of his adherents in this country. The large Tory majority in the House of Commons was disunited owing to internal dissensions, and the Jacobites were divided in opinion as to the course they should pursue. "The Queen is pretty well at present, but the least disorder she has puts us all in alarm, and when it is over we act as if she were immortal," Swift had written to Peterborough on May 18. "Neither is it possible to persuade people to make any preparation against the evil day." When the hour came, the Jacobites were stupified by the rapidity with which the Whigs worked, and Bolingbroke uttered a piteous cry to Swift on August 3 : "The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday, the Queen died on Sunday ! What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us !" Atterbury showed more spirit, for when Bolingbroke refused to proclaim the Pretender, he cried,

with an oath, " There is the best cause in Europe lost for want of spirit ! "

In accordance with a provision of the Regency Act, Parliament was summoned, and Shrewsbury as Lord Treasurer for the time being abrogated to himself the authority of Prime Minister. The customary dutiful Addresses were passed, and supplies were voted, including the arrears due for payment to the Hanoverian troops ; a reward of £100,000 from the Treasury was announced for the capture of the person of the Pretender if he landed in the kingdom ; and some Tories tried to win favour with George by moving that the Civil List of Anne, £700,000, should be increased by £300,000, but the motion was not carried. The King's replies to the Addresses were received before Parliament rose on August 23, on which date it was prorogued until September 23, by which time it was expected George would be in England. The reply to the Address of the House of Lords ran—

" I take this first opportunity to return you my very hearty thanks for your Address, and the assurances you have given me therein. The zeal and unanimity you have shown upon my accession to the Crown are great encouragements to me, and I shall always esteem the continuance of them as one of the greatest blessings of my reign. No one can be more truly sensible than I am, of the loss

sustained by the death of the late Queen, whose exemplary piety and virtues so much endeared her to her people, and for whose memory I shall always have a particular regard. My best endeavours shall never be wanting to repair this loss to the nation. I will make it my constant care to preserve your religion, laws, and liberties inviolable, and to advance the honour and prosperity of my kingdom. I am hastening to you, according to your desire so affectionately expressed in your Address."¹

Toland's assurance has already been given that the Electress Sophia had not differentiated between Whig and Tory at her Court, although it must have been very clear to her she had little to expect at the hands of the latter party as a whole, even though some members preferred the Protestant to the Catholic succession. In this matter George, before his accession, followed his mother's example, and, although it was not difficult to guess at the state of his *feelings*, from his *attitude* it had been impossible to discern where his sympathies lay; and the mystery was deepened by the fact that while Bernstorff corresponded with the Whigs, Görtz kept in communication with the Tories.²

¹ *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, p. 148.

² The statement of Horace Walpole (*Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. cxiii) that, "It is certain

All uncertainty on this point was removed when, while still at The Hague, George accepted Bothmer's recommendation of a Whig ministry, and appointed Charles, Viscount Townshend, Secretary of State, with power to nominate his colleagues. Townshend's cabinet included Marlborough, Somers, Sunderland (Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), Halifax (First Lord of the Treasury), Cowper (Lord Chancellor), and Stanhope (Secretary of State); the remaining principal members of the Government being Devonshire (Lord Steward), Wharton (Privy Seal), Orford (First Lord of the Admiralty), Somerset (Master of the Horse), Walpole (Paymaster of the Forces), and the Tory peers, Nottingham (Lord President of the Council) and Shrewsbury (Groom of the Stole).

Indeed, if George at Hanover had held the balance between Whigs and Tories, on his accession he had no choice but to entrust the government to the former party.

" Your Duteous Subjects, Sir, and Loyal,
As we've been *always* found on Tryal,
The Tories of Great Britain (People
Devoted to the *Crown* and *Steeple*)

that during the reign of Anne, the Elector George was inclined to the Tories, though after his mother's death and his own accession he gave himself to the opposite party," remains a mere assertion, uncorroborated by any contemporary authority.

Humbly beg leave to represent
Th' occasions of our Discontent ;
And hope your Sacred M——y
Will with our *Just* Requests comply.
We know the Whigs, a hated Race,
Who now, alas ! fill every *place*,
And much possess Your Royal Ear,
To our great Grief ! . . . would make appear,
That we're by Principle Untrue
And Disaffected, Sir, to You :
Whereas, may't please You, we are known
To be th' Upholders of the Throne ;
And they themselves, who write base Lies
Asperse us, are Your Enemies.
Oh ! give us Leave, Sir, to disclose
Who're Your Best *Friends*, and who Your *Foes* ;
For, Mighty Prince, You're but a *Stranger*,
And therefore may not know the Danger
That always will attend Your Reign,
If You trust *those that brought You in.*"¹

So a Tory rhymester might address the King, but the latter could not conceivably entrust power to a party, the majority of which was pledged to the Pretender, and, throughout his reign, was alert to foster discontent ; and he was perforce thrown into the hands of the Whigs, and eventually compelled, by the inexorable logic of events to place Walpole at the helm of affairs.

On the evening of September 17, George anchored off Gravesend in a fog, and it was not

¹ *The Tories Address to King G——e* ; 1716.

until the following afternoon (Saturday) that he landed at Greenwich, where he was welcomed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Justices, and other prominent folk. It was observed that he was no longer at pains to disguise his likes and dislikes, and that he ignored Oxford and Ormonde, and smiled on Marlborough and the other Whig leaders. If he had had his way he would at once have repaired to St. James's Palace, but he reluctantly abandoned this plan when he was told by his English ministers that he was expected to remain at Greenwich until Monday morning, when he must make his entrance in state. Indeed, preparations had already been made for the procession, and a public notice had been issued by the Lord Marshal—

“Whereas the solemnity of the King's royal entry from Greenwich, through the City of London, to his royal Palace of St. James's, is appointed to be on Monday, the 20th of this instant September. This is therefore to give notice to all the nobility and others, who are to attend the King in their coaches. That they repair to Greenwich Park, so as to be there by ten of the clock that morning at farthest ; where their coaches will be put in order by the Officers of Arms appointed for that purpose.

“And that the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Recorder

and Sheriffs of London, unto such as have served or fined for Aldermen and Sheriffs of the said City ; the City Officers, and the Detachment of the Artillery Company ; as also the Knight Marshal's men, the King's Kettle-Drums and Trumpets, the King's Herald, and Sergeant-at-Arms, the Gentleman-Usher of the Black Rod, and the officers and yeomen of his Majesty's Guard, etc., do meet in Southwark about twelve of the clock, and extend themselves in the order they are to march from the foot of London Bridge to St. Margaret's Hill, and there wait his Majesty's arrival ; and so soon as notice is given that the coaches are coming into Kent Street, they are all to be marshalled in their due order by the Officers of Arms.

“ And for the better reception of his Majesty in his royal passage, the officers of the various parishes between Greenwich and London are hereby required to take care that the highways be well mended and repaired ; And that the Justices of the Peace of Surrey, the Lord Mayor of London, and the Head Bailiff of Westminster, do cause the streets to be well cleared from filth and dirt, from Kent Street and to his Majesty's royal Palace of St. James's ; And that no carts nor drays be suffered to go in the streets and road which the King passes through between Greenwich and St. James's on the day of his Majesty's entry ;

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Also that no hackney-coaches be suffered to go in the said road or streets after twelve of the clock the same day ; And that no coach, cart, or carriages whatever be suffered on that day to stand in the said road or streets, until the royal procession is passed by.

“ SUFFOLK, M.¹

“ *Sept. 19th.*”

The King, accompanied by his son and the Duke of Northumberland, Captain of the Life Guards-in-Waiting, and preceded by two thousand of the nobility and gentry in carriages drawn by six horses, drove to town, stopping *en route* at St. Margaret's Hill, in Southwark, where he was met by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London, in whose name Sir Peter King, the Recorder, made the following speech—

“ May it please your Majesty !

“ Your Majesty is now entering the Liberties of the City of London. The Citizens have, with impatience, waited for your royal Presence amongst them, to receive those invaluable blessings which they promise themselves from a Prince of the most illustrious merit. Enlivened by the distant influence of your Majesty's Government, they have earnestly desired its nearer approaches. The

¹ *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, p. 251-253.

long-expected day is now come, a day of universal joy, to see your Majesty's solemn entrance with his Royal Highness the Prince into the capital of your kingdom.

"The Citizens of London never met any of your predecessors, Kings or Queens of the Realm, with more duty and loyalty than they meet your Majesty ; nor with a greater desire to testify their joy in the most becoming and affectionate manner. History has preserved the memory of several triumphant and joyful entries. But the exultations and triumph of those entries, even in the most joyful, are not to be mentioned with the ecstasies and rejoicings of this. There was not the like reason and occasion for them. We now behold a Prince, famed for his justice, clemency, and wisdom, come to take possession of his kingdoms ; we see our religion secured, our laws and liberties preserved, our public credit advanced, our utmost wishes exceeded, the Protestant succession, concerning which we had many anxious and solicitous thoughts, taking effect in a quiet and peaceable possession, and a prospect of a lasting and continued settlement under your Majesty, and your royal posterity after you.

"We have nothing new to do, but, securely enjoying our sun, to beseech God Almighty to bless your Majesty with a long, happy, and glorious

reign, and to do everything in our respective stations, which may contribute to make your Majesty's government safe, prosperous, and easy."¹

George was greatly astounded by the vast concourse of people that lined the route to St. James's; and said afterwards that the crowd reminded him of the pictures of the Resurrection, to which Lady Cowper (the wife of the new Lord Chancellor) replied aptly, "Sire, it is our political resurrection!"

The new King held a Court on September 21, and was engaged in matters of state until his coronation which took place in Westminster Abbey on October 20, in the presence of the peers and commons of Parliament of every shade of political opinion, from rank Jacobite to staunch Hanoverian, including Bolingbroke, to whom the King had refused to grant an interview. "One may easily conclude this was not a Day of real Joy to the Jacobites. However they were all there, looking as cheerful as they could, but very peevish with Everybody that spoke to them. My Lady Dorchester stood underneath me; and when the Archbishop went round the Throne, demanding the consent of the People, she turned to me and said, 'Does the old Fool think that Anybody here will say no to his Question, when there are so many

¹ *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, pp. 253-255.

drawn swords ? ' However, there was no Remedy but Patience, and so Everybody was pleased, or pretended to be so." ¹

¹ Lady Cowper : *Diary*, p. 5.

Catherine, daughter of Sir Charles Sedley, was the mistress of James II, who created her Countess of Dorchester. She is reported to have said : " I wonder for what qualities James II chooses his mistresses. We are none of us handsome, and if we have wit, he has not enough of it himself to find it out." Lady Dorchester had a pretty wit, and when at the coronation she met the Duchess of Portsmouth, a mistress of Charles II, and Lady Orkney, a mistress of William III, " Good God ! " she cried, " who would have thought we three w——s would have met together here."

According to Vehse (*Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 189), when the Champion rode into the Abbey and cried his challenge, one lady called out that James III was the rightful sovereign.

CHAPTER XV

ENGLAND'S INDICTMENT OF GEORGE I

IN those days, so far as the interchange of news was concerned, Germany was far more remote from this country than are to-day the most distant parts of the earth ; and it is, therefore, no matter for surprise that little or nothing was known, even by the upper classes, about the new King before his arrival. The English people at the beginning of the eighteenth century were as prejudiced against the inhabitants of other lands as such, as still are the poorer and less intelligent sections, that is, the vast majority, of the community. " They look on foreigners in general with contempt," wrote that intelligent observer, César de Saussure, " and think nothing is as well done elsewhere as in their own country, and certainly many things contribute to keep up this good opinion of themselves, their love for their nation, its wealth, plenty, and liberty, and the comforts that are enjoyed. They see, on the other hand, what a number of foreigners come to England to seek their fortunes, and comparatively few out of mere curiosity, whilst Englishmen, on the contrary, do not leave their country, but

if they do, it is only for a few years, and generally only for pleasure.”¹ De Saussure is corroborated on this point by the widely-travelled Baron von Pöllnitz: “I shall only say a word or two of the character of the English people; I thought Englishmen were much the same in their own country as the French are out of France, that is to say, haughty, scornful, and such as think nothing good enough; and in like manner they are when abroad what the French are in their own country, good-natured, civil, and affable. Of all nations I found the Italians were most esteemed in England, the French and Germans being in some degree hated. But their hatred to the Germans is of no older date than the reign of the Elector of Hanover; for till then the English looked upon us as if they neither loved nor envied us, but now they have a notion that the money of England goes over to Germany, and seem to think that we had no coin till they called the House of Hanover to govern us.”² The anonymous translator of the Baron’s *Memoirs* (edition 1738) enters a protest against this indictment: “Our author,” he says, “made too short a stay at this time in England, and was too much circumscribed in his

¹ *A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I and George II*, p. 177.

² *Memoirs*, Vol. IV, p. 249.

conversation while he was here, or surely he would not have ventured to have charged our country in general with the idle surmises of the ignorant vulgar.”¹ The translator’s loyalty to his countrymen is worthy of all praise, but unfortunately his defence will not bear examination, for in the first place it was not Pöllnitz’s first visit to England, and secondly facts prove conclusively that the Baron’s statement was not a repetition of “the idle surmises of the ignorant vulgar.”

When George came to England, very naturally he was made the subject of vigorous attacks by Jacobite writers, and much evil that they said of him has clung to his memory ; nor were these calumnies balanced by any flatteries from those who supported the Hanoverian succession, for the latter were never at any great pains to defend him against misrepresentation and slander so long as the onslaughts were personal and not political, for though they had at heart the interests of their country and that of the sovereign in so far as it was bound up with it, they were usually indifferent and frequently hostile to the King as a man.

In course of time misrepresentation would have revealed itself as false, and slander died a natural death, had it not been that these potent forces were backed by the still greater power of ignorance,

¹ *Memoirs*, Vol. IV, p. 249, footnote.

so that all the lies uttered passed into currency as if stamped with the hall-mark of truth.

"GEORGE THE FIRST—STAR OF BRUNSWICK.

"He preferred Hanover to England,
He preferred two hideous Mistresses
To a beautiful and innocent Wife.
He hated Art and despised Literature ;
But he liked train-oil in his salads,
And gave an enlightened patronage to bad oysters.
And he had WALPOLE as a Minister :
Consistent in his Preference for every kind of corruption."¹

So wrote Thackeray in 1845, and the epitaph is quoted here because it conveys in a nutshell the feeling of the English to George I during his reign, and even more than a hundred years after his death. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it still represents the general opinion in this country of the first King of the Brunswick line who was called to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland. This verdict has survived until to-day, probably because it contains those half-truths that are more difficult to overthrow than lies, yet nothing could be more unjust.

The cause underlying the dislike of the English people to George I was that they resented being ruled by a foreigner, even by a foreigner whom they had called to the throne, especially by a foreigner

¹ *The Georges* (*Punch*, October 11, 1845).

who did not show himself grateful for the signal honour paid him by being given the opportunity to save a country in which he had no stake from the worse fate of its sovereignty being assumed by a native Prince. Of such a man they thought nothing too bad could be said, and lampoon after lampoon appeared in which he was portrayed as very much below the angels. One of the most popular of these productions was entitled "A Dialogue between the old black horse at Charing Cross and the new one with a figure on it in Hanover Square," and it was sung to the tune of "The Abbot of Canterbury."

" In London late happen'd a pleasant discourse
'Twixt an old English nagg and a Hanover horse ;
No wonder, my friends, if plain English they speak,
For in old Æsop's time horses spoke heathen Greek.
Derry, derry down.

" King Charles's black nagg, being tired of the town,
From fair Charing Cross one evening stole down,
And trotting along t'wards the fields for fresh air,
He spy'd a strange beast up in Hanover Square.
Derry, derry down.

" Marching up, he most civilly greeted the steed,
But soon found he was not of the true English breed,
And the rider he thought a much more awkward thing,
For he look'd like a lout, and was dressed like a king.
Derry, derry down.

" The Charing Cross nagg thus began : ' Brother Pad,
'Tis enough, sure, to make any mortal horse mad
To see such a rider bestride a poor horse ;
Were you hag-ridden, sure you'd scarce be no worse.'
Derry, derry down.

" Quoth the poor harmless beast, ' My hard lot I must bear,
And I but the lot of these three kingdoms share ;
For this wretch on my back has a proverb on's side,
" Set a beggar on horseback, to the devil he'll ride." '
Derry, derry down.

" ' You seem to have brought him full many a long mile,
But Englishmen, sure, will ne'er think it worth while
For this creature to rule them, to send very far,
When my good master they never would bear.'
Derry, derry down.

" ' We came from a poor little town called Hanover,
But, oh ! had you seen us before we came over,
You'd say times mended with me and this stupid thief
Since I've eaten good oats and his worship good beef.'
Derry, derry down.

" Says Charles's black nagg, ' Be ruled by me,
To Tyburn go now, being on the right way,
There carry him thither, and there let him swing,
Or else pull him home like a dog on a string.'
Derry, derry down."¹

An analysis of the charges brought by his new subjects against George I show that they were many and varied, and were brought against him not only as sovereign but also against him in his private character. It may be convenient to give

¹ Quoted in J. Fitzgerald Molloy : *Court Life Below Stairs*.

them, grouped together, under the following headings—

- (I) He was a blockhead.
- (II) He was a cold, selfish libertine.
- (III) He had been a villain in his conduct to his wife.
- (IV) He had brought with him a band of mistresses.

Those were his offences as a man : these as a king—

- (V) He was ignorant of the English language.
- (VI) He had little knowledge of the English constitution.
- (VII) He loved his native country, and went there whenever he could.
- (VIII) He sacrificed the interests of England to those of Hanover, and
- (IX) He had brought with him a number of rapacious Hanoverians.

The truth of these statements will presently be examined, but the important thing to bear in mind is not whether the indictment as a whole or in part was true, but that, founded or unfounded, it was believed to be so by the populace and by a great number of persons who should have known better.

As a matter of fact, however, it was not so much the charges already alluded to that prejudiced the

people against George, but his shortcomings in other directions. The English did not object to him because he was a libertine, but because the women in his train were not young, beautiful, and well-dressed ; they did not care if he was a fool, but they resented the undeniable fact that he had not the charm of manner and the handsome appearance of the Stuarts ; they felt aggrieved that he disliked the parade of state ; they complained that he did not frequently appear in public, conveniently forgetting that when he did so he was greeted with hoots and hisses.

So far did prejudice go, indeed, that though George had been elected to the sovereignty of Britain on account of the religion he professed, now that he had come to this country an endeavour was actually made to arouse public feeling against him on religious grounds. This attempt succeeded only in so far as it gave some trouble to the monarch. " The Elector is a thorough Protestant, without the least tincture of Popery, either from inclination, example, or education," Toland wrote after his visit to Hanover ; " and no less agreeably to the original principles of the Reformation than to those of sound reason ; he's staunch for such a liberty of conscience as is consistent with the safety of the National Church ; and consequently his zeal for the legal Establishment (which will

for ever be according to law and gospel) can never extinguish his affection or charity for any other sort of Protestants, which must naturally recommend him to the veneration of them all."

Tolerant of all sects was George, as Toland declared, and Protestant, of course, so far as he had any religion in him. His mother was a Calvinist, his father a Lutheran, and he was brought up in the paternal faith, which, it happened by chance—for the question of the succession had not then arisen—was more in harmony than Calvinism with the tenets of the Church of England as by law established, except, indeed, in the important matter of the Real Presence, in which the Lutherans believed. The differences of the faiths were exaggerated, and shortly after the accession the ministers, to set the matter at rest, caused to be written and published a *History of the Lutheran Church, or, The Exact Account of King George's Religion*. This was a clever move, but the author in his zeal over-emphasised the points of resemblance between the Lutheran faith and the Church of England and glossed over the question of the Real Presence ; thus laying himself open to attack, which came promptly in the form of *A Letter of a Schoolboy to the Author of the "History of the Lutheran Church."* However, when it became known that though there were several Lutheran

churches in London, George attended the English service,¹ and when it was seen he had no intention to interfere in matters of religion, this agitation died a natural death. The argument that a Lutheran was not an English Churchman was of little service to the Jacobites, for it was clear even

¹ The King, possibly induced thereto by policy, overcame his dislike to parade and always went on Sundays to church in state. "Knowing there was a gallery leading to the chapel through which the Court must pass, we posted ourselves on it, and had not long to wait. Six Yeomen appeared at the head of the procession; they reminded me very much of the Swiss Guard at Versailles, being dressed in the same quaint fashion. They carried halberds on their shoulders, and walked two and two. These Yeomen were followed by several gentlemen of the Court, by the Duke of Grafton, the King's Chamberlain and by the Duke of Dorset, Master of the King's Household, each carrying a long white wand of office. Two sergeants-at-arms, or mace-bearers, followed, carrying their maces on their shoulders, these being of silver-gilt, surmounted by crowns of the same precious metal. A nobleman of the Court followed carrying the sword of state. This weapon is very long and broad; the scabbard is of crimson velvet, the hilt of massive gold, enriched with some precious stones. The King then appeared, followed by the three young Princesses who reside with him in the Palace; they are the Prince of Wales's three eldest daughters. Each of these young Princesses was escorted by her squire, the train of her dress being carried by pages. About ten Gentlemen Pensioners closed the march. These gentlemen compose the King's special bodyguard, and consist of about forty persons with their officers. Their dress is of scarlet, with braidings and laces of gold. They carry small axes or halberds covered with crimson velvet, and ornamented with big silver-gilt nails."—De Saussure: *England in the Reigns of George I and George II*, pp. 39–40.

to the meanest intellect that, however great might be the discrepancies between these faiths, they were as nothing compared to the differences between the English and the Roman churches.

Perhaps the English might have forgiven their King everything, if only he had not retained his affection for his native land and his fellow-countrymen (the latter with, as a writer with splendid insularity has put it, "cacophonous outlandish names"¹), for this carried with it the almost unpardonable sin of implying that he did not regard England as the greatest or even the pleasantest country in the world. Jealousy, indeed, was at the bottom of the trouble, jealousy more than anything else: this is everywhere to be seen in the tone of contemporary memoirs, and instances of conflict between the members of the two nations are to be found in great profusion. Lady Cowper relates that when she was dining with a mixed company of English and Hanoverians, Mrs. Clayton, with doubtful taste, was in rapture at all the kind things that the Prince of Wales had been saying of the English, "that he thought them the best, the handsomest, the best shaped, the best natured, and lovindest people in the world, and that if anybody would make their court to him, it must be by telling him he was like an Englishman.

¹ Larwood: *Story of the London Parks*, Vol. I, p. 149.

This did not at all please the foreigners at our table ; they could not contain themselves, but fell into the violentest, silliest, ill-mannered invective against the English that ever was heard, and nothing could make Monsieur Schütz believe that there was one handsome woman in England.”¹

The same writer records another instance that occurred a fortnight later : “ The Countess of Buckenburgh said, in a visit, that the English women did not look like women of quality, but made themselves look as pitifully and sneakingly as they could ; that they hold their heads down, and look always in a fright, whereas those that are foreigners hold up their heads and hold out their breasts, and make themselves look as great and stately as they can, and more nobly and more like quality than the others. To which Lady Deloraine replied, ‘ We show our quality by our birth and titles, Madam, not by sticking out our bosoms.’ ”²

The curious thing is that, since the prejudice against George was so strong, the antagonism was not carried further. It has already been mentioned that the announcement of his accession was quietly received, and the first sign of disfavour to the new dynasty was shown on Coronation day, when there were riots at Bristol, Chippenham,

¹ *Diary*, March 22, 1716 ; pp. 99–100.

² Lady Cowper : *Diary*, April 4, 1716 ; p. 102.

Norwich, Reading, Birmingham, and a few other places.¹ "This day I read to the Princess [of Wales] the original affidavits concerning the riots at three several places on the coronation day, which gave an account of the affronts offered to the King," Lady Cowper noted in her *Diary* on November 19. "The pretence was that the other side would have burnt the Pope and the Pretender [in effigy]; that they had notice Sacheverell's image was to be burnt, and the word was given, 'Sacheverell for ever!' as I believe it was all over England; and in some of these places they added 'D——n King George!'" "'Tis certain," she added, "that the hopes of the Tories ran very high, and that all endeavours imaginable were used to get a Tory Parliament, not a night passing but some scandalous pamphlet or other was cried about some of the Whigs."

Yet reports of imaginary speeches of the Whigs could not inflame the public, nor even, to any considerable extent, the Pretender's "Lorraine Proclamation," that arrived in this country about a month after George's accession, in which he spoke openly of the late Queen's good intentions to him, and stigmatised "the usurper" as "a foreigner, ignorant of the laws, manners, customs, and

¹ See *Political State of Great Britain*, Vol. VIII, p. 362 and onwards.

language of England." After the insurrection of '15, many people all over the country, it is true, wore oak-leaves, the badge of the Stuarts, on the King's birthday, but defiance to the reigning monarch rarely went further than this. Oxford, the home of the loyalists, was, of course, a hot-bed of Jacobitism: when the attainder of the Duke of Ormonde deprived him of the Chancellorship of Oxford University, and the King proposed the Prince of Wales as a candidate, the University showed its feeling by electing the Earl of Arran, the brother of the impeached Duke; and in 1717 its attitude became so threatening that a detachment of Dragoons was quartered there. It happened at the same time that George sent to Cambridge, which was loyal to the Protestant succession, a present of books. This gave an opening for a *jeu d'esprit* to Joseph Trapp, a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, who wrote—

" Our royal master saw, with heedful eyes,
The wants of his two Universities.
Troops he to Oxford sent, as knowing why
That learned body wanted loyalty;
But books to Cambridge gave, as well discerning
How that right loyal body wanted learning."

To this Sir William Browne replied—

" The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,
For Tories knew no argument but force.
With equal care, to Cambridge books he sent,
For Whigs know no force but argument."

Though this and other dangers were successfully tided over, the dislike of the English for George never died away, and there was point in Lord Chesterfield's bitter sarcasm, "If we have a mind effectually to prevent the Pretender from ever obtaining this Crown, we should make him Elector of Hanover, for the people of England will never fetch another King from there." Jacobite squibs took George for their subject throughout his reign, and it did not mind the opportunity offered in 1724 by the elevation of a statue of the King in Roman dress on the steeple of the newly-built Church of St. George, in Hart Street, Bloomsbury.¹

"THE DEVIL O'ER LINCOLN.

" (*To the tune of 'A Cobbler There Was.'*)

"As the Devil o'er Lincoln was looking one day—
For when Satan looks sharp he can see a long way—
He spy'd an odd figure on Bloomsbury steeple
With his horns high exalted surveying the people.
Derry down, etc.

¹ "The steeple is a masterstroke of absurdity, consisting of an obelisk, crossed with a statue of King George I, and hugged by the royal supporters," Horace Walpole commented; and a contemporary wit poured ridicule on it in a quatrain:

"When Harry the Eighth left the Pope in the lurch,
The Protestants made him the head of the Church;
But George's good subjects, the Bloomsbury people,
Instead of the Church made him head of the steeple!"

" THE DEVIL O'ER LINCOLN " 229

" 'How now,' quoth the Devil, 'what spy I at London?
Should I suffer a rival, myself would be undone.'
And whilst a man scarce could toss off his flagon,
The Devil was mounted on Bow steeple Dragon.

Derry down, etc.

" From thence Satan kenn'd the sweet face o' the creature,
He knew his old Friend in each line and each feature:
Without further preface he addrest his ally,
With a, 'How the plague, George, came you mounted so
high?

Derry down, etc.

" 'Speak, how got you up? I shall humble your pride—
What, have you now learn'd on a broomstick to ride?'
'No, softly,' quoth George, 'you be vastly mistaken,
Me be ne'er por de vitch, nor the conjuror taken.

Derry down, etc.

" 'But to tell you de trute vas plac'd here by my brewer,¹
Ven I vas as ignorant of it as you are;
But do' I'm a fool, as you plainly may see,
You have not von more humble servant dan me.

Derry down, etc.

" 'Do' your highness have place your own council about me,
Yet you still must acknowledge you cannot do widout me;
'Tis I who to all your vile projects give birth,
And each plotta form'd in hell, go in my name on eart.

Derry down, etc.

" 'Vat has lately been done may convince you full vell,
Dat in my reign you should ne'er vant subjects in hell;
Our late swearing Act² you'll allow was a trap-a,
Me leave not a loop-hole for von to escape-a.

Derry down, etc.

¹ A Mr. Hucks, who presented the statue of the King to the newly-designed parish, of which he was a vestryman.

² Alluding to the Act, passed in the ninth and tenth years of George I, by which all persons were required not only to take the oaths of allegiance, but also to register their estates.

" ' Vo ter Divel could e'er done more in my station,
 Since vit one single Acta me damm de vol nation ;
 Men of ev'ry degree, vomen rich and poor,
 From her Highness of Wales to de street-walking w——.
Derry down, etc.

" ' Vere it not for me you'd be plagu'd vit de clergy,
 And some of dem, Sir, would confundedly scourge ye ;
 Should me souffre dere daum Convocation¹ to fitta—
 O den, Broder Satan, we bote might be bitta.
Derry down, etc.

" ' But my bishops from all dere attempts will secure ye,
 And dey are your best vrends on eart, I'll assure ye ;
 Dere is but very few on dat Rev'rend bench
 But adore you as much, Sir, as me or my vench.
Derry down, etc.

" ' Dere is but Chester and Bat, now Rochester's² fled.'
 ' Zounds ! ' quoth the Devil, ' their names make me dread ;
 If you must prate of bishops, you fool, can't you think on
 York, Winchester, Salisbury, Durham, and Lincoln.
Derry down, etc.

" ' Or the bishop of Asaph, that dear little whoreson,
 Who's as like them in soul as he may be in person ;
 He propagates vice, religion pulls down,
 Which, you know, is the only support of your crown.
Derry down, etc.

¹ The two Houses of Convocation were deprived in 1717 of their privilege to discuss ecclesiastical matters, on the occasion of the Lower House taking exception to the doctrines contained in the writings of Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, and more particularly in a sermon which he preached before the King on March 31 in that year.

² Francis Atterbury.

" ' Those, those are brave souls, worthy Satan's alliance,
 With such troops I'd boldly bid Heaven defiance ;
 Since you make such bishops, George, you may reign on,
 For the Devil can't find such a pack when they're gone.'
 Derry down, etc.

" The monarch of Hell flew away in a trice,
 Th' Elector of Britain look'd wondrous wise :
 Thus ended their Treaty, as most people say,
 He'd be glad to come off half so well at Cambray.¹
 Derry down, etc."

It is a fact to be remembered, however, that, notwithstanding England's alleged grievances against George, when it might have deposed him, as assuredly it could have done had it, in 1715 or later, by rallying round the standard of the Pretender, so far from taking advantage of the opportunity to place the latter on the throne, showed itself very clearly in favour of Guelph against Stuart.

¹ An allusion to the abortive congress held at Cambray, 1721.

W. W. Wilkins : *Political Ballads*, Vol. II, pp. 206-210.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HANOVERIAN JUNTA IN ENGLAND

FOR so great a personage as a King of Great Britain and Ireland, George I brought with him on his first arrival a modest suite. The Household, from highest to lowest, numbered sixty-three, and included John George, Baron von Kielmansegg, Master of the Horse ; Ernest Augustus, Count von Platen, son of the late Prime Minister of Hanover ; Christian Ulrich, Baron von Hardenburg, Marshal of the Court ; Brauns, a Lutheran preacher ; Doctors Steigerdall and Chapuzeau, Rothe and other surgeons ; and an apothecary, Jäger ; five body-servants, including the Turks, Mahomet and Mustapha ; four pages, two trumpeters, a carver, twelve footmen, eighteen cooks, three cellarmen, two housemaids, and *one washerwoman*. The disproportion between the number of cooks and the number of washerwomen is remarkable ; but it has been mentioned in an earlier chapter of this work that in 1696 there were only two washerwomen for the three hundred and seven persons, exclusive of royalty, that then made up the Court at Hanover ! Besides the

Household, George brought with him a political staff, consisting of twenty-three persons, through whose agency he designed to keep a controlling hand on the affairs of his Electorate : among these were Andreas Gottlieb, Baron von Bernstorff, Prime Minister of Hanover ; Frederick William, Baron von Schütz-Görtz, Finance Minister, Baron von Hattorf, War Minister ; and John Robethon. These, with Fräulein von der Schulenburg (afterwards Duchess of Kendal), Baroness von Kielmansegg (afterwards Lady Darlington), and the wives and children of the various officials made up the King's entire *entourage*, in all about one hundred and fifty persons, of whom a number less than one hundred were on the salary list.¹ John Casper, Baron von Bothmer, was, of course, already in England.

Many of those who came over with George hoped for lucrative appointments in the British service, while others, like Bernstorff and Bothmer, looking to the example of King William's foreign favourites, desired peerages and grants of land,² but all alike were doomed to disappointment, for the

¹ For a full list of those who held positions on the political staff or in the Household, see Malortie: *Geschichte des Braunschweig-Lüneburgischen Hauses und Hofes*, Vol. I, pp. 58-60.

² Mahon: *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*, Vol. I, p. 316.

framers of the "Act for the further limitation of the Crown" of 1700, while willing to accept a foreign King, were fully alive to the fact that a number of the monarch's countrymen would follow him in the hunt for fortune, and, so far as they could, they guarded against foreigners acquiring any stake in the government of the country. "No person born out of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging (although he be naturalised or made a denizen, except such as are born of English parents)," so runs clause three of the above-mentioned Act, "shall be capable of the Privy Council, or a Member of either House of Parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of trust, either civil or military, or to have any grant of lands, tenements, or hereditaments from the Crown to himself or to any other or others in trust for him."¹

Doubtless many of "the foreigners," as the English people called them contemptuously, were aware of this limitation of the royal power, but probably they thought that after the accession means would be found either to repeal the obnoxious clause or to evade it. There is no reason to believe, however, that George even proposed to alter the law, and if he did it is certain there was

¹ *Statutes at Large*, Vol. IV, p. 63.

no minister courageous enough to introduce such an unpopular measure ; certainly he never made any attempt to evade it. "I have thought it worth while to go through the *Calendars of Treasury Books and Papers* for the years 1729-30, 1731-4, 1735-9, very elaborately prepared by Mr. W. A. Shaw, as well as the earlier volumes covering the years 1720-8, in order to ascertain whether they exhibit any traces of appointments of Hanoverian subjects or other Germans to minor posts under George I or George II, that might perhaps have been allowed to step through the meshes of the Act of Settlement," Dr. Ward has written. "But I have only come across a few German names belonging to doubtless deserving men nominated to tide-underships, and to the holders of a court office or two. . . . Incidentally, it may be added that these *Calendars* mention no German recipient of any kind of pension charged to the public account, with the exception of this busy political agent [Charles Holzendorff, a very active minor diplomatist], and of one other person in whose case the charge is on the Irish establishment."¹ It may, therefore, be taken for granted that, with scarcely an exception, no Hanoverian was appointed to any place or profit under the Crown or rewarded with a title—though, after the

¹ *Great Britain and Hanover*, pp. 49-50.

accession of George I, Hanoverian officials, like all Germans fond of wordy distinctions, styled themselves "*Königliche-Grossbritannische-Kurfürstlich-Braunschweig-Lüneburgische*" ("Royal-British-Electoral-Brunswick-Lüneburg's") magistrates or councillors, according to their degree. It is almost needless to say that, while the Hanoverians took no part in the British Government, Englishmen received no appointments in the Electorate.

If "the foreigners" had been content to abide by the clause refusing them employment, payment, or honours in this country, the new King would have been spared much unpopularity, but this act of self-denial was beyond their strength. "These mistresses, ministers and favourites, coming from a poor Electorate, considered England as a land of promise, and at the same time so precarious a possession, that they endeavoured to enrich themselves with all possible speed," says Coxe; and Lord Mahon speaks of "a flight of hungry Hanoverians, [who] like so many famished vultures, fell with keen eyes and bended talons on the fruitful soil of England."¹ These writers cannot be accused of exaggeration; and, though many of the complaints made by the English against their new King were unreasonable, it cannot be denied that the charges of rapacity brought against

¹ *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*, Vol. I, p. 316.

the Hanoverians who accompanied George to England were well founded.

Though, naturally enough, in those days the whole body of the Hanoverians in this country were regarded by the people as being tarred with the same brush of dishonesty, there is no excuse to-day for showing the same lack of discrimination, for in their midst were many honourable gentlemen who never dreamt of plundering. Among the latter, Frederick William, Baron von Schlitz-Görtz, deserves mention. Chancellor of the Exchequer at Hanover, in England he acted as adviser to George in matters of finance connected with the Electorate ; he won tributes from such different folk as Toland, who wrote him down " a man of excellent parts and great generosity,"¹ and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who mentions that he had managed the Hanoverian treasury for thirty years " with the utmost fidelity and economy," and that he " had the true German honesty, being a plain, sincere, unambitious man."² Schlitz-Görtz must have been uncomfortable in his relations with his compatriots here ; and, after a quarrel with Bernstorff, he returned to his native country, where he enjoyed the last years of his life in peace.

¹ *An Account of the Courts of Prussia and Hanover*, p. 55.

² *An Account of the Court of George I at his Accession. (Letters*, ed. Thomas ; Vol. I, p. 4).

The Hanoverians who loomed most largely on the English horizon during the early years of George's reign were Bernstorff, Bothmer, and Robethon ; and of them something must be said.

Bernstorff was first in the service of Charles Lewis, Duke of Mecklenburg, who married a lady of the French house of Montmorency. With the Duchess, who was very handsome, Bernstorff fell madly in love, and, although at all other times a sober, rational being, under the influence of this passion he committed so many extravagances that he had to leave the Court. His *inamorata*, perhaps not ungrateful for the excitement aroused by the statesman's infatuation, recommended him to George William, Duke of Celle. As minister to George William, Bernstorff made himself very useful to Ernest Augustus, Duke of Hanover, especially by advocating the marriage of Sophia Dorothea to George Lewis, and so he became *persona gratâ* at the Court of Hanover. On the death of George William, the Duchy of Celle passed to George Lewis, now Elector, who at once secured the services of Bernstorff, and appointed him Prime Minister when that office was vacated in 1709 by the death of the Count von Platen.

"Although from time to time Bernstorff experienced opposition," Marshal von der Schulenburg noted, "he always secured his object, and could

make the Elector do what he wanted." This account of his influence was confirmed by the Duchess of Orleans, who, on June 9, 1718, only too glad to wield a double-edged sword, wrote : " How can this King of England, who is so dreadfully alarmed lest anyone should imagine that he lets himself be ruled, submit to be led in this way by that Bernstorff, and against his own children, too. . . . My son has to-day confirmed me in my opinion that it is Bernstorff alone who turns the King against his near relations and also against the King of Prussia. The man is a real devil, and a wicked devil too. He has this inducement to make trouble, that so long as the King is on bad terms with the Prince of Wales, the minister can dispose of places without interference. It is a disgraceful state of affairs that everything is managed with gold. There are scoundrels (*Käuzen*, literally, screech-owls), who hide their misdemeanours under a cloak of devotion."

Bernstorff came to England as chief of the Hanoverian Chancery established in London, and he directed the foreign policy of George as Elector of Hanover. For some time he was all-powerful, and his policy of "*Dissimuler, c'est regner*" bore fruit ; but he made too many enemies, and these threw in their lot with the Heir-Apparent, and undermined his position. He was unsuccessful

in 1716 in his endeavour to carry through the King's wish to fetter the power of the Prince of Wales as Regent during his Majesty's first visit to Hanover since his accession, and four years later a reconciliation between the King and his son was actually effected without his knowledge. When George went to Hanover in 1720 Bernstorff accompanied him, but when the King had to return to England in hot haste, owing to the bursting of the South Sea bubble, the minister remained behind. He came to London years after and died there in 1726 at the age of seventy-seven.

Like Bernstorff, Bothmer had entered the service of George William, Duke of Celle, and there he remained until the death of that Prince in 1705. Until he was forty years of age he was unknown beyond the limits of his master's territory, but in 1696 he went to Vienna as the Envoy of the House of Brunswick-Celle, and in the following year represented this minor Power at the negotiations that resulted in the Peace of Ryswick; after which he went to Paris as Envoy at the Court of Louis XIV. He was now so highly esteemed by the Elector George Lewis, to whom he naturally transferred his services in 1705, that after the passing of the Act of Settlement, he was entrusted to safeguard the interests in England of the House

of Hanover : in view of the known sentiments of Queen Anne, he did not go to England, but went instead as Envoy to The Hague, from where he directed the important matter entrusted to him. He did his work well, and acted as a Plenipotentiary at Utrecht, where the treaty was signed in which the continental powers bound themselves to recognise the Hanoverian succession. Not all Bothmer's tact could make him acceptable to Queen Anne and her ministers, and it was a blow to her when in 1714, after she demanded the recall of Schütz, the Hanoverian envoy, he was replaced by Bothmer, whom she feared and detested. On the accession of George I he was probably the most powerful man in England, for the King, trusting him implicitly, accepted his advice, and followed it almost without question. He it was who suggested that Townshend should be appointed Prime Minister, and he was very disappointed that Townshend did not repay him by showing deference to his opinions and recommendations. In 1715 Bothmer was created by the Emperor a Count of the Empire (*Reichsgraf*), and in 1727 he went to Hanover as Prime Minister, an office he held until his death five years later.

John Robethon was a Huguenot refugee, who found employment at the Hague, probably as a

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spy, and became so useful to William of Orange that he rose to be Secretary of State for the principality, and when William became King of England accompanied him to London. Robethon made the acquaintance of Duke George William when the latter came on a visit to England, and on the death of William III the Duke invited him to enter his service. In due course, like Bernstorff and Bothmer, he served George Lewis. He devoted all his time and energy to the task of securing the Hanoverian succession, and Macpherson goes so far as to say that the Elector would never have been King of England but for him. He corresponded regularly with the leading Whigs, and kept in touch with all who could serve the cause ; he instructed all the Hanoverian envoys in connection with this matter, and all the letters from Sophia and George Lewis to their supporters in England were drafted by him. He had great influence with his master, with whom he came to this country as private secretary. It is worthy of note that though he continued in London to be the chief confidential agent of the policy directed by Bernstorff and Bothmer, he did not draw a salary from England, and only received from Hanover the emoluments of his official post of Privy-Councillor. He was employed by Sunderland to work with Bothmer to alienate the King

from Walpole and Townshend, but his influence was seriously diminished when Walpole, in spite of all intrigues, returned to power. Robethon died in 1722.¹

It was these three men in particular, Bernstorff, Bothmer, and Robethon, who, finding they could hold no place of profit or power under the Crown in any direct way, determined to use their influence with their royal master in such a way as to enrich themselves. "The foreigners," wrote Peter Wentworth, shortly after George's accession, "though they pretend to have nothing to do with English affairs, yet from the top to the bottom they have a great 'shout' in recommending persons that are fit to serve his Majesty; most, nay all, the addresses are made to Monsieur de Bothmer, he having been so long in England, and is supposed to know all the English. There are people wicked enough to suggest that way is made by some to these persons by money."² The sting of this statement is in the last sentence, for it soon became a notorious fact that those who wanted any office must be prepared to bid high to some one of the Hanoverians about the Court, who were willing

¹ Robethon's wife, a Hanoverian lady of lower rank, was remarkable for an exceptional squatness of person and a croaking voice, which obtained for her the name of "Madame Grenouille" (Madame Frog).

² *Wentworth Papers*, Vol. II, p. 40.

to obtain for their clients titles, or salaried posts, not only in Great Britain but also in the Colonies.

It is difficult to say which of these men were the worst in this respect. Perhaps all were equally avaricious, but the best hated was undoubtedly Robethon. "Robethon's impertinence is so notorious that depend upon it he does all the mischief he can," Walpole wrote to Stanhope, and in a confidential paper, dated 1714, Marshal von der Schulenburg remarked: "Robethon is a bad fellow (*schlechter Kerl*), and Bernstorff's right hand. If you knew how affairs were conducted you would certainly be grieved: here as elsewhere the shadow of virtue is taken for the substance. I was never more astonished than when I saw printed in the newspapers the private letters that Queen Anne had written to Hanover: this again is the act of Robethon."¹ Mahon sums up this minister as "a prying, impertinent, venomous creature, for ever crawling in some slimy intrigue,"² and no one has dissented from this verdict.

"Bothmer has every day some infamous project or other on foot to get money, and his disappointments in these particulars are what he cannot

¹ Vehse: *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 224.

² *History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*, Vol. I, p. 316.

bear, having nothing in his view but raising a vast estate to himself ; and, therefore, he will never be satisfied until he has got the Ministry and Treasury into such hands as will satisfy his avarice at the expense of the King's credit, interest, and service," Lord Townshend stated, and his testimony is supported by many writers. Ker of Kersland¹ is not the most reliable authority, perhaps, but there is a ring of truth in the account of his request to be appointed to the post of Governor of Bermuda. He claimed to have rendered services of value to the Hanoverian succession, which had cost him much money, and he felt sure his application would be successful as Schlitz-Görtz supported him, and Bernstorff assured him " he would likewise back my petition [to the King], for it was very just." " I was not a little surprised," says Ker, " when I heard from a German favourite of the Baron's, not long afterwards, that I could not succeed if I made not Monsieur Robethord (*sic*) my friend, by a present of five hundred guineas, because he had such prodigious influence with Bernstorff that I could

¹ " John Ker (1673-1726) of Kersland, Ayrshire, Government spy ; in the pay both of the Government and the Jacobites ; declared himself instrumental in securing the Hanoverian succession, 1714 ; died in King's Bench debtor's prison ; his memoirs published by Edmund Curll, 1726."—*Dictionary of National Biography*.

not expect success another way.”¹ Ker did not take the hint, and the governorship was given to another. “Next time I met with Bernstorff, he looked with quite another air than he used to do, knowing me not to be a man for their purpose.”²

According to Ker of Kersland, the Hanoverian junta traded not only on their influence with the King, but also upon their knowledge of State secrets, and were willing enough even to provoke a war for the benefit of their purse. He relates an incident, which is given here for what it is worth.

“King George, since his accession to the British throne, by the advice of his foreign councillors, purchased from the Danes their Duchies of Bremen and Verden, which they had forcibly taken from the Swedes, and in 1715, as Elector of Hanover, declares war against the King of Sweden. . . . It would be manifold injustice to charge the British ministry with advising the purchase of the Duchies of Bremen and Verden, who could not be guilty of anything so directly contrary to the faith of King William, and the British nation in general, to which they certainly had yet a greater regard.

“Neither should the Hanoverian Ministry be blamed for this advice, since their duty equally

¹ John Ker of Kersland : *Memoirs*, Part I, p. 103.

² *Ibid.*, p. 104.

obliges them to have a regard for the interest of their own country, and to have as little respect for the credit and interest of ours as we ought to have for them ; and as it is specially provided in the Act of Settlement that Great Britain is not to be concerned in his Majesty's administration as Elector of Hanover, so it may reasonably be thought, that it would be very imprudent in them to endeavour to impose falsehoods upon the British nation, especially when they are calculated only for their political interests.

“ I shall dwell no longer on this subject, than to observe, that a little after this new acquisition to the Electorate of Hanover, there was a squadron of English men-of-war fitted out and sent to the Baltic to straiten (*sic* !) the Swedes ; and a Proclamation issued out, prohibiting our trade with them. I shall not presume to allege that the foreign ministers influenced these notions, only there happened an accident at that time, which would countenance such a supposition, *viz.*, some time before the prohibition of trade with the Swedes was declared, or any of our English merchants knew anything of it, advices came from merchants abroad at Amsterdam, etc., to buy up all the Swedish iron they could find ; for such a day the aforesaid Proclamation would be out, which answered exactly to the foreign advice ; and

afterwards the price of iron was raised almost double to what it was before.

"It is possible this view of Great Britain's interest may, by the ignorant, be misconstrued as a mark of dissatisfaction with his Majesty's conduct ; but none that know me can surely be so base as to charge me with any such just imputation ; for it is very plain that the Parliament, which settled the succession, had the very same thoughts in this particular that I have, by the provisions they made in that glorious Act against the possibility of foreigners interfering with our affairs, who were not only therein declared incapable to enjoy any manner of public office, or to have any part of our legislature or administration in their hands, nor that Great Britain should be so urged to have any regard to his Majesty's wars or disputes of any sort, as Elector of Hanover."¹

It is but fair to state that this plausible statement brought trouble in its train, for in the Michaelmas term of 1726 the Attorney-General, Philip Yorke, laid an information against Edmund Curll, the publisher of the book (the author being dead), "for having wickedly and maliciously printed and published, and caused to be printed and published . . . said libel of and concerning the

¹ Ker of Kersland : *Memoirs*, Part I, pp. 125-9.

said present Lord the King, and the administration of the said Lord the King in the government of this kingdom.”¹ No notice, however, was taken of Ker’s further remark : “ Why do not the foreigners gratify their favourites privately, so as all the world should not know it, since they have so many means to do it, even the Privy-Purse in their hands ? No, they are so arrogant that a public statue or monument must be erected upon the ruins of what ought to be so dear to every British subject, and their authority and credit proclaimed by sound of trumpet, to let all foreign princes and states know that they are the only people to apply to in British affairs of the greatest consequence ; that they have power enough to trample upon and evade even Addresses of Parliament, and the King’s most gracious Answer.”² It is difficult, however, to believe that Robethon’s impudence went so far as to threaten Sir Robert Walpole himself, yet this, too, John Ker would have us believe. “ R[obert] W[alpole], Esquire, got a patent for the reversion of a place in the Customs to his son, which Mr. R[obethon], before mentioned, being informed of, he told Mr. W—— that he was in terms of disposing of it to another for

¹ Curll was fined twenty marks, and had to stand for an hour in the pillory at Charing Cross.

² Ker of Kersland : *Memoirs*, Part II, p. 111.

£1,500, and would let Mr. W—— have it for the same sum if he pleased ; and upon Mr. W——.'s contemptibly rejecting his proposal, he resented it so, that Mr. W—— was turned out of his own public posts, and of all favour at Court, even at a time when he was about to execute a generous public good, to lessen the debts of the nation.”¹

George I seems to have put no check on the rapacity of these men, and, by accepting their nominations, he cannot be held innocent of the charge of having given them direct encouragement to persevere in their scandalous conduct. Indeed, though he did not plunder for himself, he was quite willing that the members of his suite should do the best they could for themselves in this way. “The King,” wrote Count de Broglie to the French King on July 6, 1724, “has no predilection for the English nation, and never receives in private any English of either sex ; none even of his principal officers are admitted to his chamber of a morning to dress him, nor in the evening to undress him. These offices are performed by the Turks, who are his *valets-de-chambre*, and who give him everything he wants in private.”² He rather

¹ Ker of Kersland : *Memoirs*, Part II, p. 109.

² Mahomet and Mustapha were taken prisoners when George was serving with the Imperial army in Hungary. When he was wounded in that campaign they tended him so faithfully that he took them to Hanover, and eventually

considers England as a temporary possession, to be made the most of while it lasts, than as a perpetual inheritance to himself and family." As he could not reward his followers with offices or pensions chargeable on the English or Irish establishments, he did the next best thing and gave them opportunities in other ways to amass money. Thus, Robethon procured from him the grant of Clerk of the Parliament for anybody he would name when death removed the present holder of that appointment, and the confidential adviser sold the reversion to Spencer Cowper, Member of Parliament for Truro, for the sum of one thousand eight hundred pounds.

When a cook George had brought from Hanover asked permission to return because he could not be responsible for the prodigal waste that was in such startling contrast to the rigid economy of Herrenhausen, "Never mind," the monarch is reported to have said, "my present revenues will bear the expense; do you steal like the rest"—

brought them to England, where they were appointed Pages of the Backstairs, and were supposed to have much influence with their master. Pope mentions them in his *Moral Essays* (Epistle 2):

"From peer or bishop 'tis no easy thing
To draw the man who loves his God or King,
Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
From honest Ma'hmet, or plain parson hat."

he laughed—"be sure you take enough."¹ This and other stories may well be apocryphal, but it has been stated again and again on good authority, that George had no belief in the disinterestedness of statesmen, and when Walpole complained of the predatory habits of "the foreigners," he retorted, "I suppose you also are paid for your recommendations!" "It was much talked of," Horace Walpole has recorded, "that Sir Robert, detecting one of the Hanoverian ministers in some trick or falsehood before the King's face, had the firmness to say to the German, '*Mentiris impudentissime.*' The good-humoured monarch only laughed, as he often did when Sir Robert complained to him of his Hanoverians selling places, nor would he be persuaded that it was not the practice of the English Court."²

As time passed, however, the English ministers contrived to defeat the Hanoverian junta. Bernstorff was literally driven to Hanover in 1720; the return of Walpole to office in the following year routed Bothmer and Robethon; but even before this their influence was on the decline, and in November 1719 Lord Sunderland was able to send the glad tidings to Lord Carlisle: "I must also congratulate you upon another thing, which

¹ Jesse: *Memoirs of the Court of England*, Vol. II, p. 298.

² *Reminiscences of the Courts of George I and George II*, p. ci.

I know you have long had at heart, and which will contribute more to the King's and the public service than any other thing ; that is, the resolution the King has taken, not to suffer his Germans to meddle in English affairs, he having forbid them to presume so much as to speak to him about them ; and this he has ordered all his servants to declare to everybody to be his resolution, and tells it himself to as many as come to him." ¹

Schlitz-Görtz must have been as much out of place as Leibnitz would have been had he come to England. "I both wish and hope that our German ministers will never offer to meddle in British affairs, which would not only be very unjust in itself, but also very reasonably make the King lose the affection of his people," that discerning philosopher wrote to Ker of Kersland, just after George's accession. ²

¹ *Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Report XV, App. vi, p. 23.

² Ker of Kersland : *Memoirs*, Part I, p. 101.

Leibnitz's letter was in answer to one from Ker, dated August 25, 1714, in which he said : "I am sorry to tell you that I find the Hanoverian ministers altogether unacquainted with our country's affairs, that even Bernstorff [f] himself is led by the nose in those matters by an ignorant fellow called Robatham (*sic* /), who has nothing to recommend him but his own private interest, party rage, and insolence enough to do too much mirching at this critical juncture, upon which all our future happiness depends."—(*Ibid.*, p. 95.)

It is to the credit of Ker of Kersland that he foresaw the trouble that would be created in England by the Hanoverians, and he did his best to prevent it by begging Leibnitz, who was at Vienna when Queen Anne died, to return in haste to Hanover. "It will be much for the King's service, and the happiness of Great Britain," he wrote from Hanover on August 14, 1714, "that you instantly leave Vienna, and make haste to Hanover, for by reason of your universal knowledge, particularly of the British affairs, your long experience, and great reputation with the King, you are justly entitled more than any man in the world to be his chief counsellor before he goes to England, whose manners and language he is but too much a stranger to."¹ Leibnitz obeyed the summons, but owing to ill-health he had to travel slowly, and he did not arrive at Hanover until after George had left.

It may be doubted if Leibnitz's influence would have outweighed that of the ministers, and probably if he had followed his master to London he would, so far as affairs of state were concerned, have been as much out of place as honest Schlitz-Görtz. He may have realised this, but, notwithstanding that drawback, he wished for other reasons to come to London. "It is my misfortune that I do not

¹ Ker of Kersland: *Memoirs*, Part I, p. 94.

live in a great city, such as London or Paris, where I might meet with learned folk," he had complained earlier to Bishop Burnet. "Here in Hanover there is scarcely a congenial person. Indeed, a man would be a bad courtier who introduced learned subjects into conversation, for such matters are not discussed, except by our great Electress." ¹

Leibnitz wrote to George to ask permission to come to England, but a curt reply came from Bernstorff: "You would do well to remain in Hanover to proceed with your work. I hope you have not forgotten the subject of which he spoke, the migration of nation." Thereupon the great philosopher administered a well-deserved rebuke: "I do not know that anything has ever so deeply wounded me as to that, while all Europe does me honour, in Hanover, where I have most right to expect it, it is denied me." ²

It is easy to believe Bernstorff and the other ministers opposed his coming to England, for they realised that his broad views of men and affairs would clash with their underhanded actions, and would be inconvenient, if not awkward. Leibnitz understood that he was to be relegated to such obscurity as the ministers could devise, and he

¹ Vehse: *Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig*, Vol. I, p. 230.

² *Ibid.*

determined that, so soon as he had finished the work to which Bernstorff alluded in his letter, the History of the House of Brunswick, he would go to Vienna, and there spend the last years of his life.

Unhappily his days were numbered, however, and he died, just after he had completed his History, at Hanover in November 1716. John Ker, who arrived at that city on the day of Leibnitz's death, followed the philosopher's coffin to the grave. "I must confess," he wrote, with righteous indignation, "it afforded me matter of strange reflection, when I perceived the little regard that was paid to his ashes by the Hanoverians; for he was buried a few days after his decease more like a robber than, what he was, the ornament of his country!"¹ It is further worthy of note that his *Annales Imperii Occidentis Brunsvicenses* remained in manuscript for one hundred and thirty years in the Hanoverian Library; it was first printed in 1846.

It has been said that when someone congratulated George I on his accession to the English throne, the monarch replied, "Rather congratulate me on having Newton as a subject in the one country, and Leibnitz in the other."² It is

¹ Ker of Kersland: *Memoirs*, Part I, p. 117.

² Seward: *Anecdotes of Distinguished Persons*, Vol. II, p. 295.

almost certain that the King never uttered so sententious a remark, and there can be little doubt it has been attributed to him by some writer who only dimly recalled Fontenelle's magnificent eulogy : " This King [George] has under one sceptre an electorate and three kingdoms, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, and Isaac Newton ! "

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